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AV. LESLEY DEL.

NEW VIEW OF SCHOHARIE SCHOHARIE CO.

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HISTORY  
OF  
SCHOHARIE COUNTY,  
AND  
BORDER WARS OF NEW YORK;

CONTAINING ALSO

A SKETCH OF THE CAUSES WHICH LED TO THE  
AMERICAN REVOLUTION;

AND

INTERESTING MEMORANDA OF THE MOHAWK VALLEY;

TOGETHER WITH

MUCH OTHER HISTORICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS MATTER,  
NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

ILLUSTRATED WITH MORE THAN THIRTY ENGRAVINGS.

BY JEPHTHA R. SIMMS.

Sleep soldiers of merit, sleep gallants of yore,  
The hatchet is fallen, the struggle is o'er,—  
While the fir tree is green and the wind rolls a wave,  
The tear drop shall brighten the turf of the brave.—*Upham.*

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ALBANY;  
MUNSELL & TANNER, PRINTERS  
1845.

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TO THE YOUNG MEN OF THE  
SCHOHARIE AND MOHAWK VALLEYS,  
*Classic Grounds for the Antiquarian,*

This volume is respectfully dedicated. And should the young be interested in its perusal, and its scenes of blood tend to increase their *love of country* and *hatred of tyranny* inspiring them with gratitude towards the heroes of the Revolution,—a spirit to emulate their daring deeds, and a desire to become familiar, not only with the stirring events which have been enacted near their own domestic altars, but a perfect history of their whole country—her institutions and the manner of preserving them ; then will his desired reward be attained.

THE AUTHOR.



## PREFACE.

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Comparatively few persons ever read the *preface* of a book, although every one should who would peruse the contents of the latter understandingly: for as a door serves us to enter the dwelling of our neighbor, so a preface is given by the writer of a volume as *its* entrance. That individual who does not read what an author says of his own book, can never fully appreciate its merits or demerits. Says Phillips in his *Million of Facts*: "Let us garner up our notices of past ages, and preserve them in the archives of the country: we shall please and instruct ourselves by so doing, and make posterity lastingly indebted to us for the deed. To transmit the honors of one age to another is our duty; to neglect the merits of our fathers is a disgrace." Actuated by corresponding motives, I commenced collecting historic matter in 1837, with the view of making it public.

From the lips of many hoary-headed persons of intelligence then living, whom I visited at their dwellings at no little sacrifice of time, the matter presented in the following pages was taken down; which individuals could say of numerous important transactions—

I was an actor in, or I witnessed them.

The collection of materials for this volume began just before it was publicly announced, that Col. Stone's forthcoming *Life*

of *Brant* would serve up many border transactions, but rightly conjecturing that not a few would escape that writer's notice, particularly of a personal character, which might prove highly interesting to the general reader, I continued my gleanings; with what success the following pages will show. This volume does not profess to contain a detailed narrative of all the tragic scenes enacted on the frontiers of New York; for the reader is aware that several large books filled with such matter have already been published. I have aimed, therefore, to present incidents which have escaped the knowledge of previous writers, or transactions to which I could add new facts, generally noticing in their place, however, the most important events published by other authors.

When writers are obliged to rely principally on *oral* testimony for what they publish, they are liable, from the treachery of memory in some, and the fondness for the marvelous in others, to imposition, to be practised in turn upon their readers. Aware of this, in matters of importance I have principally confined my inquiries to individuals sustaining a character of conscientious regard for the truth. More than this, I have had the same stories related by as many different persons as possible, often strangers to each other; and then, on carefully examining their testimony, have been enabled to arrive, as I believe, very satisfactorily at the truth. These antiquarian researches should have been made at an earlier day, but the stale maxim, "better late than never," will surely hold good in this instance if any.

When I commenced collecting materials for this work, I had not designed to make it so extended, but incidents of real interest coming to my knowledge, which transpired in sections remote from the Schoharie settlements, where those researches began; I resolved to enlarge it so as to garner up as many



unpublished events as possible, particularly of the Revolution; in pursuance of which plan I visited not a few aged persons in the Mohawk valley. To render the book generally useful, believing it would fall into the hands of some who might never read an elaborate history of the American Revolution, I concluded to incorporate from the most authentic sources, a brief sketch of the principal *causes* which brought about that Revolution, adding to it the *Declaration* of our Independence, a document, which, though now in the possession of comparatively few, should be in the hands of every American citizen.

Since the subject matter of the volume has taken a wider range than was at first anticipated—in truth, not a few novel and important facts have come to hand since a prospectus was issued for it, the author has thought seriously of changing the title because too local; but as often has the question of the poet arisen — “What’s in a name?” and not fastening on any one more satisfactory, it has been retained. That portions of the volume may be found obnoxious to criticism, I do not doubt, as it has mostly been written in the midst of the family circle and domestic cares. Indeed, had it been penned under more favorable auspices, I am not quite certain it would have been pronounced a very classic production; for, having been bred behind a counter, much of my early life was devoted to merchandising instead of letters. A friend who has often seen me in my *studio*, surrounded by my family, has wittily suggested the propriety, not inaptly I must confess, of *dating* this volume in the *kitchen*, and *dedicating* it to my *better-half*.

The reader may expect to discover some little repetition, and a want of smoothness and harmony in its parts, since portions of this work have been added as new light has been cast upon them, long after others were written: besides, some of it has

undergone a hasty abridgement to bring it within the volume, which now by far exceeds its intended limits. Care has been taken to correct several errors into which previous writers have fallen, from their not sufficiently authenticating what they published ; and it is very possible with all my pains-taking, that I have fallen into some. If an essential one should become apparent to any reader, he will confer a favor on the author by pointing it out ; as also he will by transmitting ancient writings, or interesting unpublished facts to his address. A true history of the Revolution cannot be written until the epitaphs of all the actors in that great struggle for civil liberty shall have become moss-bound ; for as the several parts of a body serve to make up its whole, I conceive it necessary to bring together those scattered parts before it can be pronounced complete. Frequently do historic facts spring into life on the death of a scarred veteran, when, perhaps, for the first time his old papers fall under the observation of individuals who can appreciate their worth.

Although apprised by some of my pioneers in book-making that *local histories seldom quit cost*, and urged by timid friends long since to abandon the whole enterprise, still I have persevered in presenting the volume, such as it is, to the public, feeling conscious, whether deceiving myself or not, that I was discharging a duty I owed my country ; and if I have brought into the general store-house any new materials for the future historian, then has my labor not been in vain. That portions of matter in the following pages may be thought by some readers of too little importance to merit a place ; or that other passages are too minutely detailed — too prolix to suit fastidious tastes, I do not doubt. What pleases one will not always please another, and that which some readers would be most desirous to retain, would possibly be the first rejected by others. The mi-

nuteness with which our countrymen Stephens, Brooks, Clark and other gifted writers have described what they saw and felt, is the charm which renders their writings peculiarly acceptable to most readers. As seasoning in food renders it more agreeable to the palate, so small incidents, trivial in themselves, if not tedious, may give zest to a published event.

I would here acknowledge my indebtedness to all such persons as have in any manner aided me, by communicating information either by letter or otherwise; and while I do so, take pleasure in expressing my especial obligations to my friends, Mr. Allen V. Lesley, a young gentlemen of much promise, who sketched with accuracy the principal views with which the volume is embellished; to my engravers, particularly to Messrs. V. Balch and E. Forbes, who have done most of the engraving, for the skillful manner in which they have executed their trust, and to the Rev. John M. Van Buren for taking some pains unsolicited, to bring the work into favorable notice. So much imposition has of late been practised in the sale of books by subscription, that I should not forget to signify my gratitude to those who have conditionally agreed to purchase this book, as they have secured to me the means of its publication.

Persons of little reading are incredulous when told that interesting facts of by-gone days remain unpublished, but my investigations have been sufficient to satisfy me, that thrilling incidents of an unique character may yet be brought to light, and I cannot refrain from indulging a hope, that other writers will enter the field to glean where yet they may. And now, in closing my introduction and offering this humble effort to the public, to seek its share of popular favor, I cannot refrain from observing, that I am induced to do it, more from a desire to become useful than conspicuous.

J. R. SIMMS.

*Fultonville, N. Y.*





# CONTENTS.

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## CHAPTER I.

Origin and signification of Schoharie—Schoharie tribe of Indians, how formed and distinguished—Location of Mohawk Castles—Indian Confederacy of New York and policy of the Albanians—Course of the Confederates in the Revolution—Arts of the aborigines—Mysterious pit—Indian customs and worship—Proper use of tobacco—Indian villages—Residence of Karighondontee—Indian Castle at the Wilder-Hook—Indian name of mountains—Number of Schoharie Indians—Their coat of arms—Their foot-paths—North America peopled by religion—Policy of Queen Anne towards German emigrants—Schoharie settled by Germans—Their passage from Europe—Encamp on the Hudson—Arrive at Albany—Distinction between German and Dutch—Messengers sent to Schoharie—Party remove thither—Incidents on the way—Origin of the word Helleberg—Location of Schoharie settlers—Their names—Probable number. . . . . *Page 21*

## CHAPTER II.

Poverty of Schoharie Germans—Birth of four children—First wheat sown in Schoharie—Milling done at Schenectada—Industry and Bravery of the women—Physicians and Ministers—First horse—Settlement in Vrooman's Land—Indian titles at that place—Murder of Truax—Its object how revealed—Arrival of Bayard—Nature of his visit mistaken—Attempts to capture him—He escapes to Schenectada—Schoharie lands sold at Albany to seven partners—Foot race at Weiser's dorf—Battle between Captain Hartman and his Indian neighbors—Puts a spell upon their guns—Smoking of the calumet—Sheriff Adams arrives at Weiser's dorf—Rides upon a rail—Returns to Albany—Delegates sent from Albany to England—Are committed to the Tower—Their return home—Weiser and others remove to Pennsylvania—Origin of Cook-house—Horses return to Schoharie—Instances of brute instinct—Justice Garlock removes to the Mohawk valley—Evidence of his justice. . . . . *51*

## CHAPTER III.

Ancient apple trees—First grist-mill in Schoharie county—Cobel's mills—Indian name of Cobelskill—Old mill-stone—Introduction of bolting-cloths—Schoharie fashions—Profitable women—Buttons—Dandies—Long beards—First cider made in the county—First wheel-wright—First German school in America—Schools in Schoharie—First black-smith in Schoharie—Domestic beer—Dutch pride and prejudice—Introduction of slaves and their treatment—Farming utensils—Mode of threshing with horses—Shoemakers—Tailors—Hatters—Abundance of fish—How exterminated—Wild animals—A German killed by a bear—Anecdote of the bear-catcher—A bear killed by a German—Hunt on Fox's creek—A tartar caught—Prominent hills east of Middleburgh—A panther story—Beavers and their dams—Doct. Moulter kills a wild-cat—First distillery in Schoharie—Fate of its owner—An Indian shoots six deer with arrows—Rattle snakes—How destroyed—Indian courtship—Schoharie Indians sell lands—Ancient bond—Purchases of Indians how legalized—Royal permit to purchase of Indians—

Sale of lands in New Dorlach—Reservations to government—Sales made in presence of Sir William Johnson—Certificate of Thomas Bradstreet—Certificate of Mayor of Albany respecting sale of slaves—The King's highways, how obstructed—First merchant in Schoharie—Anecdote of his marriage—His portrait—The second merchant—His will—A cannon, to whom presented and when used—Origin of Punchkill—Anecdote of John J. Lawyer—Liquor drank at funerals—Indian murders—Savage act of a father—An Indian marries his prisoner. . . . . Page 79

#### CHAPTER IV.

Groat family settle in the Mohawk valley—Erect a grist-mill—Highland troops arrive at Fort Johnson—Lewis Groat captured in the French war—Incidents on his way to Canada—His return home—Murder of Mrs. Van Alstyne and captivity of her daughter—Sir William Johnson—His birth—Is agent for Sir Peter Warren—Establishes himself at Warren's Bush—Becomes an Indian agent for the British government—Obtains a house-keeper—His marriages—Is created a Baronet—Erects Fort Johnson—Builds mansions for his sons-in-law—Removes to Johnson Hall—Sir John Johnson—His marriage and subsequent conduct—Sir William's death—Guy Johnson succeeds him as Indian agent—Johnson mansions by whom occupied in the Revolution—Their confiscation—Commissioners for selling confiscated personal property in Tryon county—Confidential slave of Sir John Johnson—His recovery—Sale of Johnson Hall—Spook stories—Sir William Johnson a great land-holder—His fondness for women—Lives with Molly Brant—Pleasing anecdotes of the Baronet—Notices of him from the Gentleman's Magazine—His coffin made into bullets—Place of his burial—His portrait—Old King Hendrick—Dreams with Sir William Johnson—Commissioners of the colonies and Chiefs of the Six Nations meet at Albany—Speeches of Hendrick and other chiefs—Capt. John Scott erects Fort Hunter—Queen Anne's Chapel and Parsonage—Indian war dances, how observed at Lower Mohawk Castle—Rev. John Stuart removes to Canada—Sells a slave—Scott's Patent—Marriage of Ann Scott—An Irish colony—Jelles Fonda an early tradesman on the Mohawk—A match at boxing—Smoking at funerals—Boating on the river—Names of rapids—Little Falls—Gen. Schuyler constructs inland Locks—Evidence of his prudence—Durham boats on the river—Difficulties to encounter—Accidents—First bridges in the Mohawk valley—Early merchants at Canajoharie—A duel—The Yankee Pass—Caughnawaga Church—Indians obtain a church bell at the Upper Mohawk Castle—Location of Forts Herkimer, Dayton and Plain—Land speculations—Tragic adventure at the Devil's Hole—Ancient tax-lists—Large bill of rum—First Court held in Tryon county—Herkimer county organized—Public punishment—Changes in Western N. York. 105

#### CHAPTER V.

Strength of the Vrooman family—A load of wheat—Women go to market and work in the field—Dutch fondness for horses—Feats of strength—Trial of strength and speed—Charitable act of Miss Vrooman—Weddings how celebrated—Gifts to intended brides—Horning at weddings—Playing cards—Fiddlers—Frolicking—Female ball dress—Dancing fifty years ago—Anecdote of Judge Brown—Supper how eaten—Dutch eat their plates—New Year's day how observed—Christmas, Paas and Pinkster—Early farming—Dutch butter—Sour-croust how made—Dutch dishes—More witchcraft—How to get rid of rats—Schoharie invaded in the French war—An Indian treaty—A jubilee—Riding on horseback—Sparkling—Why Americans degenerate—First Schoharie tea-party—Causes of the American Revolution—Ignorance of the British ministry—Opposers of British tyranny—Freedom of opinion by whom established—English policy for raising a revenue—Debt of England—Tax imposed—Gov. Bernard issues a pamphlet—Stamp duties—Virginian boldness—Franklin in England—Perseverance of Grenville—Barre's reply to Townsend—Sayings of Franklin—Friends of Stamp Act how treated—Virginia resolves—Continental Congress—Death and resurrection of liberty—Sons of liberty—Patriotic ladies—Speech of Pitt—

Franklin interrogated—Repeal of Stamp Act—Popularity of Gov. Bernard—Domestic looms resumed—India tea rejected—British troops sent to New York and Boston—Dickinson's Essays—Gov. Bernard returns to England—Convention at Annapolis—Troops at Boston fire on the citizens—Event how celebrated—Extract from Dr. Warren's Oration—Tax on tea retained. . . . . Page 155

## CHAPTER VI.

A contest approaches—Burning of the Gaspee—Gold versus liberty—Prediction of Patrick Henry—Espionage of Gov. Hutchinson—Town Committees organized—Franklin sends home letters—East India Company in trouble—It sends tea to America—Its destruction at Boston—Unwise acts of the British government—Predictions of Gov. Johnson and Gen. Conway—Just views of Bishop Shipley—Effect of Boston Port-Bill—Call for a Congress—Patriotic mottoes—Proceedings of Congress—Allan's comment on the ability of that Body—Warm discussions in Parliament—Speech of Lord Chatham—Expedient of Lord North—Origin of the terms Tory and Whig—Cod-fishing prohibited—Battle of Lexington—Its effect on the country around—Capture of the northern military posts—Ethan Allen's authority—Preparations for war—Washington is appointed to command the army—Battle of Bunker's Hill—Death of Warren—Anecdotes of the battle—Arrival of Washington—Proceedings of Congress—Post-office established—Gov. Penn interrogated by the House of Lords—Hessian troops employed—American flag—Colonial Governors—Boston evacuated—Defence of Fort Moultrie—Intrepidity of Jasper and McDonald—Their dying words—Argument for education—Mrs. Elliot—Story of Jasper and Newton—Commissioners sent to Canada—Declaration of American Independence. 182

## CHAPTER VII.

Committees formed in frontier settlements—Indian treaty in Schoharie—Brakabeen Castle—Contagious disease—Schoharie Indians go to Canada—Death of granny Warree—A matricide—Schoharie Council of Safety—Ball family divided in politics—Organization of Schoharie militia—Resolution of New York Committee of Safety—Oath of allegiance—Record of Judge Swart—His personal services—Chairman Ball's sons perform extra labor—Accident on the Hudson—Anecdotes of Ball—Attempt to take his life—Character of Col. Vrooman—Attempt to capture him—Designs upon Washington—Commissioners sent to France—Events of 1776—Anecdote of a piquet guard—Washington's retreat from Long Island—Battles of Trenton and Princeton—Sufferings of Washington's army—His remarks to Colonel Reed—A singular requisition—Plan of the enemy for 1777—Arrest of Col. Huetson—Tories in Schoharie—Brant at Unadilla—Interview between Gen. Herkimer and Brant—Affidavit of Col. Harper—Particulars of the interview from Joseph Wagner—False impression of Herkimer's character corrected—Harpersfield exposed—Cherry Valley threatened—Rangers to be raised—Letter from Chairman Bail to New York Congress—Reply of that Body—They write to the Albany Committee—Geographical ignorance of State Council—Frontier how protected—Albany Committee write General Schuyler—Same Body censure New York Council—Schuyler writes Albany Committee—His apprehensions—New York Council of safety write Albany Committee, evincing warmth—Girls murdered at Fort Schuyler—Glance at the enemy's movements—Letter from Albany Committee to New York Council—Schuyler to same Body—Schoharie messenger—New York Council to Gov. Clinton—Albany Committee write the Council—Clinton's letters ordering troops to Schoharie. . . . . 206

## CHAPTER VIII.

McDonald invades Schoharie—Patriotism of Henry Hager—Messengers dispatched to Albany—Col. Harper visits Schoharie—Starts for Albany—Is visited in the night—Next day is pursued by Indians—Escapes from them and reaches Albany—Notice of his arrival—New York Council forward

letters to Col. Pawling—Harper obtains a company of Cavalry—Captain Mann how concealed—Barracks how constructed—Troops halt at Snyder's—Effect of music—Death of an Indian—Novel confinement—Madam Staats—Battle of the Flockey—Citizens accompany McDonald in his flight—Concealment and surrender of Capt. Mann—Chairman Ball to Schoharie Committee—Mann's property not confiscated—Col. Harper writes Council of Safety—Reply of that Body—Extract from Journal—Commissioners of Tryon county how instructed by New York Council—Remarks of Rev. Daniel Gros—Expedition to Norman's-kill—Advertisement, by Chairman Ball—Citizens of Schoharie transport provisions to Stillwater—Anecdote of the Patroon—New Dorchach—Money buried in Albany—Burgoyne's surrender how celebrated in Albany—Anecdote of Evert Yates—Incident of the French war—A spy in Burgoyne's camp—Death of Gen. Fraser—By whom killed—Retreat of Burgoyne how cut off—Anecdote to show skill of Morgan's riflemen—Anecdotes of the Oriskany battle—Death of Gen. Herkimer—Indians in a cellar—Corps of Invalids—British enter Philadelphia—Sufferings of the American army at Valley Forge—Anecdote of Washington—Acts of Gov. Tryon—Arrival of Lafayette—Conspiracy against Washington—A female spy and Maj. Tallmadge—Schoharie Forts when and how constructed. . . . . Page 237

## CHAPTER IX.

Interesting incidents now lost—Fortune how fickle—Last effort of Chatham—Acts of Parliament rejected—Treaty with France—Its effects—Settlement on Cobelskill—Organize a militia company—Lieut. Borst shoots an Indian—Cobelskill battle—Death of Capt. Patrick—Names of Cobelskill militia engaged—Escape of Belknap—Escape of Henry Shafer—Burial of the dead—Subsequent celebration—Designs on Cherry Valley how thwarted—Destruction of Wyoming—Dastardly act of a Tory—Invasion of the German Flats—Walter Butler imprisoned—Escapes and leads the enemy to Cherry Valley—Pleasing anecdote of Brant—England declares war against France—Battle of Monmouth—Capt. Molly—Col. William Butler goes to Schoharie—Heroic Soldiers—Fate of a Scout—Capt. Long intercepts and kills Capt. Smith—Death of Christopher Service—His confiscated property recovered—His remains how honored—Lower Fort garrisoned—Col. Butler destroys Indian towns on the Susquehanna—Col. DuBoise winters in Schoharie—Gerard arrives in the States as Minister from France—Dr. Franklin goes to France as American Minister—Price of American scalps—British possess Georgia—Washington's winter quarters—Jay chosen President of Congress. . . . . 272

## CHAPTER X.

Captivity of Cowley and Sawyer—Escape from their enemies and return to Schoharie—Murder of Durham and his wife—Capt. Hager on the Delaware—Mohawk river settlements invaded—Anecdote of Cornplanter and his Father—Contemplated invasion of the Indian settlements—Execution of Hare and Newbury—Signification of Caughnawaga—Arrest of the Spies—Burial of Hare—Clinton's army at Cooperstown—Moves down the creek—Industry of Beavers—Death of a Deserter—Anecdotes of Colonel Rigne—Col. Butler leaves Schoharie—The Boyd family—Lieut. Boyd and his sweet heart—She invokes a Curse upon him—Marriage of her Daughter—Elerson surprised by Indians—Kills one and escapes—Brown's Mills why not burned—His house plundered while he is in it—A wedding—Source of water how discovered—Anecdote of a Sentinel in a tree—Battle of Newtown—Sullivan's signal guns—Rescue of a Prisoner made at Wyoming—Destruction of Indian property—A Child found—Its Death—Scout under Lieut. Boyd—Death of an Oneida—Two of Boyd's party set out for the Camp—Murphy shoots an Indian—Scout surrounded by the Enemy—Capture of Boyd and Parker—Escape of Murphy and two others—Death of Boyd and Comrade—Fate of Han-Yerry—Indians die of Scurvy—Justice to Boyd's memory—Schools in the Revolution—Delegates from Tryon County to State Convention—Invasion of Ballston—Capture of Col. Gor-



don—He escapes with others and returns home—Command of Col. Fisher—Capt. Fonda shoots a deserter—Is tried and acquitted—John Jay sent as Minister to Spain—Attack of the Americans and French on Savannah—Death of Count Pulaski—Gov. Tryon burns several towns in Connecticut—Stoney Point stormed by Wayne—Acts of Paul Jones—Winter quarters of Gen. Washington and sufferings of his army. . . . Page 291

## CHAPTER XI.

The enemy moving—Death of a Tory named Cuck—Imprisonment of Van Zuyler—Sugar makers frightened—Lieut. Harper and friends captured by Brant at Harpersfield—Harper saves the Schoharie settlements by duplicity—Tory consultation—Harper's word doubted—March begun—Harper confronted by a Tory—Murder of an aged prisoner—Efficacy of rattle-snake soup—Enterprise to Minisink—Schoharie captives in danger of being murdered—Are saved by an Indian who escaped from Van Campen—Party feast on horse flesh—Boast of Tories—Ashes used for salt—A runner sent to Niagara—Kind object of Brant in forwarding a messenger—Running the gantlet—Prisoners before Col. Butler—Price of American blood in Canada—Condition of prisoners at Chamblee—Attack on the Sacandaga block-house—Letter of Col. Fisher—Indians pursued and killed by Solomon Woodworth and party—Public officers in Schoharie—Second invasion of Cherry Valley—Captivity of Moses Nelson—Fort Orange rebuilt—Willet's attempt to take it—Letters to Col. Fisher showing an expected invasion—Enemy enter Johnstown—Murder of the Putmans and Stevens—Fate of two Tories—Fisher family—Troops arrive in Johnstown—Death of Capt. Hanson—Signification of Ca-daugh-ri-ty—Course of the enemy—Attack on the Fisher dwelling—Fortunes of Col. Fisher and fate of his brothers—Fonda brothers—Sheriff White and his neighbors—Furniture destroyed in Maj. Fonda's dwelling—Murder of Douw Fonda—Pleasing incident—Acts of the party under Johnson—Escape of George Eacker—Johnson's confidential slave—Boys liberated near Johnstown—Invaders return to Canada—Escape of young Hanson. . . . 321

## CHAPTER XII.

Captivity of William Hynds and family at New Dorlach—An Indian attempts to surprise a sentinel at the Upper Schoharie Fort—Captivity and rescue of William Bouck and others—Seth's Henry in Vrooman's Land—Is at a spring—Resentment of the Indian William—Indians in the dwellings of the pioneers—Captive negroes liberate themselves—Attempt to capture Capt. Richtmyer—Mohawk valley invaded—Schoharie scout fall in with the enemy—Alarm guns how fired—Brant invades Vrooman's Land—Fate of the settlement—Character of Col. Vrooman—Indian grudge—Infant smiles save a father—Escape of Pull-foot Vrooman—Names of captives—Several citizens escape in a wagon—Number of houses burnt—Judge Swart's horse by whom rode—War-club of Seth's Henry—Escape of the Hager family—Old gentleman throttles his dog—His capture and treatment—Burning of Crysler's mill—Mill-stone recovered—Two Tories join the enemy—Hager family reach the Fort—Burial of the dead—Singular presentiment—Fate of the Vrooman infant—Brant releases part of the prisoners—Destructives assemble at Oquago—Prisoners divided—Boyd's scull—Lieut. Vrooman about to be murdered—Henry Hager insulted—Efficacy of tobacco—Prisoners run the gantlet—Attempt to fire the magazine at Quebec—Negro prisoners adopt the Indian's life—Loss of British ship Seneca—Schoharie prisoners lodged at South Rakela—Their return home—Particulars from whom derived. . . . 365

## CHAPTER XIII.

Romantic courtship and marriage of Timothy Murphy—The bride's first interview with her mother—The reconciliation—Duty of Rangers—Their music when on a scout—Dancing at the Middle Fort—Rival dance of the soldiers—Ballston settlement invaded—Attempt to capture Maj. Mitchell—

Enterprise of Jo. Bettys—Absence of a Schoharie scout protracted—Sir John Johnson leaves Niagara to invade the frontiers of New York—Names of hills—Johnson's army discovered—A pack horse taken—Torch of destruction first applied—Volunteers meet the enemy—Daring of Murphy—Burning of Middleburgh Church—Powder how sent up from Lower Fort—Volunteers under Capt. Lansing—Escape of Elerson—Stand made by the enemy—Mrs. Richtmyer frightened to death—How to start a bachelor—A flag of truce how attended—Is fired on by Murphy—Conduct of Major Woolsey—Surrenders his command to Col. Vrooman—Firing renewed—Loss of the Americans—Wilbur scalps an Indian—A dead Indian is found in the woods—Enemy move down the valley—Anxiety at the Upper Fort—A heroine—Lower Fort how garrisoned—Scout from that Fort meet the enemy—Death of Van Wart—Fate of Anthony Witner—Firing heard in Cobelskill—Preparations to defend Lower Fort—Salute from a grass-hopper—An ancient apple tree—War's beverage—A presumptuous Indian—Adventure of Enders—An Indian killed at a well—Fate of a deer—Mortar abandoned—A Tory arrives at the Fort. . . . Page 388

#### CHAPTER XIV.

Schoharie militia pursue the enemy—Schoharie fires seen at Fort Hunter—Cadaughrity destroyed—Enemy encamp near the Nose—Americans encamp in Florida—Battle of Stone Arabia—Death of Col. Brown—His remains honored—Pleasing anecdote of an Indian and a colt—Skirmish near St. Johnsville—Cowardly conduct of Gen. Van Rensselaer—Climax of his management—Anecdote of Capt. Vrooman—Willing captives—Schoharie horses recovered—Novel manner of carrying bread—Incidents from John Ostrom—Grain how saved—Maj. Woolsey leaves Schoharie—Death of a spy—Invasion of New Dorlach—Death of Michael Merckley and his niece Catharine—Murder of John France and providential escape of his brother Henry—Burial of the dead—A reason for Merckley's death—Number of buildings burnt in Schoharie county—Extract of a letter from James Madison—Continental money—Charleston captured—Knipphausen invades New Jersey—Arrival of French troops—Retreat of Gates and death of De Kalb—Treachery of Benedict Arnold. . . . 421

#### CHAPTER XV.

Mutiny at Head-Quarters—Erection of block-houses—Fort Duboise—Capture of Jo. Bettys and two associates—Col. Livingston's regiment in the Mohawk valley—Conduct of Maj. Davis—His death—Brant surprises a party of wood-choppers near Fort Schuyler—Americans pursue and recover shoe-buckles—Prisoners go through the manual exercise to gratify Brant—Boys captured near Fort Herkimer—Invasion of Curry Town—Escape of the Tanner family—Death of Jacob Moyer and son—Prisoners made in the settlement—Capt. Gros sent to New Dorlach—Discovers the enemy's trail and sends word to Willet—Sharon battle—American loss and death of Capt. McKean—The captive Jacob Dievendorf—A religious meeting broken up—Murder of Hoffman and wife—Capture of William Bouck and other citizens of Schoharie in a wheat field—Indians eat a hedge-hog—Escape of Lawrence Bouck—Fare of prisoners on their journey—Their return home—Ulster county invaded—Troops sent to Schoharie—Capture of Lt. Borst and others in Myndert's valley—Death of Borst—Capt. Woodworth and company surprised on West Canada creek and most of them killed—Incidents in the vicinity of Fort Dayton. . . . 450

#### CHAPTER XVI.

Invasion of Maj. Ross—Death of Myers of Curry Town—Other citizens captured—Village of Fultonville—Escape of a prisoner—Willet pursues the enemy—Battle near Johnson Hall—Incidents of the battle—Retreat of Maj. Ross—Manner of crossing creeks—Death of Walter Butler—Captivity and return of prisoners—Brant again invades Vrooman's Land—Death of Adam Vrooman—Enemy are pursued—Fate of Richard Haggidorn—



Murphy fortune's favorite—A dead Tory—Capt. Hager pursues the enemy—A rum-keg how guarded—Battle of Lake Utsayantho—Cowardly conduct of Capt. Hale—An incident which followed—Fruitless expedition of several Tories—Unexpected meeting of Capt. Eckler and Brant—Former escapes by flight—How concealed—A prisoner captured near Fort Plank—Escapes in the night—Is concealed and nearly suffocated in a log—Events of 1781—Military enterprises in the Southern States—Abortive plan to capture Arnold—Siege of York Town—Capture of Cornwallis and his army—Event how celebrated—British standards to whom delivered—Anecdotes of stealing in the Revolution—Arnold destroys New London—Death of Ledyard and Montgomery—Conduct of Col. Gallup—Massacre in the Fort and attending incidents—Anecdote of a petticoat. . . . Page 470

## CHAPTER XVII.

Predatory warfare continued in 1782—Murder of the Dietz family—Captivity of Capt. Dietz and the Bryce boys—Captivity of McFee's children—Character of Gen. Herkimer and others—Murder of Adam Vrooman—Invasion of Fox's creek—Murder of Young Zimmer and capture of his brother—Death of a Hessian—The Becker family—John Becker how killed—Escape of Jacob and Wm. Becker—Indians discovered by boys—Attack on the Becker house—Eccentricity of Shell—Attempt to fire the building—Ingratitude of a Tory—Capture of several prisoners—Novel torture—Virginian spirit—A Tory wedding—Cobelskill again invaded—Several citizens killed or captured—Capture of the elder George Warner and son Nicholas—Escape of Joseph Barner—Meat how cooked and divided—Escape of Nicholas Warner—Kind treatment of George Warner—Indian reverence of a Deity—Warner returns home—Gen. Washington visits Schenectada—Burning of that place by the French and Indians—Washington's treatment of Col. Fisher—His letter to the officers of Schenectada—Anecdote of his visit—Murphy takes a prisoner who escapes with his rifle—A Tory how concealed—Anecdote of Murphy and his cow—Notices of Timothy Murphy—Inscription on his tomb-stone—Incident at Fort Du-boise and death of a calf. . . . . 490

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Ratification of Peace—Gen. Washington resigns his Commission—Lands forfeited—Tories return to the States and boast of their deeds—Indians return to Schoharie—Fate of Seth's Henry—Attempt to kill Abram—He disappears at a Bee—Indians become alarmed—Beverages drank in the war—Incidents in the life of Capt. Eben Williams—Conduct of Col. Vose in Gates' campaign—Anecdote of Col. Scammel—Gen. Montgomery's widow how honored—Army at Budd's Huts—Duty of Col. Laurens at York Town—Anecdote of an Irish Lieutenant—Incidents of the siege—Officers killed in duels—Celebration at West Point—Cincinnati Societies organized—Habits of Capt. Williams—Military Journal of Maj. Tallmadge—Incident in the river Bronx—Tallmadge commands a squadron of horse—Corresponds with Washington—Loses his horse—Enterprise against Lloyd's Neck—Surprise and capture of Fort St. George—Washington's letter respecting it—How noticed in Congress—Capture of Fort Slongo—Enterprises how thwarted—London trade an incident of—An English Sloop captured in the Sound—Society of the Cincinnati how organized—Spies in New York how protected—Order in which the Americans entered New York after its evacuation by the British—Last interview of Gen. Washington and his officers—Maj. Tallmadge returns home—Marries and settles for life. . . 528

## CHAPTER XIX.

Capt. Thomas Machin—Battle of Minden—The Duke of Bridgewater's Canals—Machin arrives at New York—Locates in Boston—Is one of Boston Tea Party—Plans fortifications near Boston—Is sent by Gen. Washington to the Highlands of the Hudson—Coöperates with Gen. Clinton—Request of Gen. Schuyler—Putnam's Rock—Council of Safety recognize acts of

Capt. Machin—Orders to be observed by artificers—Washington's letter to Gen. Knox—Kingston how fortified—Correspondence showing the preparations making to receive the enemy—Machin a recruiting officer—Attack on Fort Montgomery—Death of Capt. Milligan—Letters of Gov. Clinton—Expense of Iron used in obstructing the Hudson—Capt. Machin writes N. York Council of Safety—Officers above their business—Letter from Gen. Parsons about fortifying West Point—Col. Hughes' letter respecting cordage—Gen. Clinton wants fish—Gov. Clinton's letter relating to lead mines—Gen. Parsons wants timber—Capt. Machin writes Gen. McDougal about river chain—Gov. Clinton will purchase a phaeton—He certifies to the acts of Capt. Machin—Chain of what iron wrought—Statement showing who fortified the Highlands and obstructed the river—Letter from Doct. Freeman—Letter from Peter Woodward—Machin's private expenses—Disburses large sums of money—Importance of the works—Importance of securing the Hudson—Expedition of Col. Van Schaick to Onondaga—A plan for supplying Albany with water—Machin in Sullivan's expedition—Letters from Doct. Young—Letters from Henry Rutgers, jr.—Death of Kayingwaurto, a Seneca Chief—Receipt for scalps—Capt. Greg and his dog—Surrender of a Wyoming Fort—Table of distances in Western New York—Letter from Gen. Clinton—Cupid in the camp—Letter from Henry Rutgers respecting sufferings of the army—Doct. Young writes on the same subject—Ezra Patterson writes from Fort Pitt—Instructions to a Committee of Officers sent to the Legislature—Letter from Lt. Bradford showing condition of the army—Capt. Hubbell wants money—Difficulties attendant on recruiting service—Capt. Machin at York Town—Maj. Popham parts with his sword—Letter from W. Morris—Machin about to marry—Recruiting orders from Gen. Washington—Extract from Parker's letter—Machin is slandered—A messenger sent to Boston—Machin marries Miss Van Nostrand—Popularity of Machin—Gen. Clinton out of money—Correspondence of Joseph Wharton respecting lands at Cooperstown—Value of Western lands—Letter from Gov. Clinton about land—Machin settles at New Grange—Order of Timothy Pickering—Certificate of Gen. Clinton—Extent of Machin's business—Great copper-firm—Machin removes to Montgomery county—His patrons and friends—He is a Freemason—Obtains a pension—His death. . . . . Page 550

## CHAPTER XX.

Schoharie County when formed and how bounded—Its towns—New era in its history—First Attorneys—Neatness of Schoharie women—Want of taste among the Germans and Dutch—Out buildings in New England how adorned—Statistics of the county—Schoharie Judges—Lime-stone and fossils—The county interesting to Geologists—Turnpike roads—Canajoharie and Catskill Rail-Road—Congressional and Senatorial Districts—Sources and outlet of the Schoharie—Extent and formation of Schoharie flats—Public executions—Trial of Van Alstyne—Establishment and history of the Lutheran Church—Singular incident in the life of Domine Sommer—Some notice of the Reformed Dutch Church—A faithful church officer—Ministerial fees—Churches when first warmed—Tidingmen and their authority—Blenheim—Statistics of the town—Jacob Sutherland once a resident—Statistics of Broome—David Elerson—How he obtains a carriage and horses—His death—David Williams—Notice of Gen. Shays—Indian war-path—Statistics of Carlisle—Town by whom settled—Its rocks and caverns—Indian's cave—Statistics of Cobelskill—Incidents in the life of Gen. Dana—Gen. Wm. Eaton—Anecdote of Gen. Lee—John Redington—Monumental inscriptions—Statistics of Conesville—Statistics of Fulton—Bouck's Falls—Ex-Governor Bouck—Abraham A. Keyser—Statistics of Jefferson—Statistics of Middleburgh—The Vlaie—County Poor-house—Statistics of Schoharie—Indian mound—Gebhard's Cavern—Otsagaragee Cavern—Nethaway's Cave—Schoharie minerals—Monumental inscription—Statistics of Seward—New Dorlach—Monumental inscription—Statistics of Sharon—New Rhinebeck—Sharon Springs—Analysis of water—Rare mineral—The Pavilion—Statistics of Summit—Lake Utsayantho. 601

CHAPTER XXI.

Ancestry of David Williams—His biography—Capture of Maj. Andre—Cow boys—Courtship of Williams—How he chanced to be one of the captors—The object of the captors' expedition—Incidents attending the arrest of Andre—A singular dream—Congress how apprised of Andre's capture—Resolution of that Body on the subject—Marriage of Williams—He participates in a celebration at New York—How honored—His death—Obituary notice of his death—His burial—Incidents connected with the arrest and execution of Andre—Instructions of Sir Henry Clinton—Papers found on Andre's person—Conduct of Col. Jamieson—Extract from the Journal of Maj. Tallmadge—Joshua H. Smith is suspected and tried—Board convened to try Andre—Manner of his execution—Champe's attempt to arrest Arnold—Capt. Nathan Hale—Bold exploit of his—His arrest and execution—Confession of Cunningham—Fate of Andre and Hale contrasted—Andre's remains taken to England—Character of Andre over-rated—Proof of his character—His poem called the Cow-Chase—Somewhat prophetic—Arnold how respected in England—An acrostic to his fame—Monuments to Paulding and Van Wart—Efforts to obtain a monument for Williams. 646

INDEX

TO POST OFFICES IN SCHOHARIE COUNTY.

	Page.		Page.
Argusville,.....	643	Hyndsville,.....	642
Barnerville,.....	619	Jefferson,.....	630
Blenheim,.....	615	Lawyerville,.....	619
Brakabeen,.....	623	Leesville,.....	643
Bynville,.....	623	Livingstonville,.....	615
Carlisle,.....	618	Middleburgh,.....	630
Central Bridge,.....	632	Mossville,.....	630
Charlottesville,.....	645	North Blenheim,.....	615
Cobelskill,.....	619	Punchkill,.....	619
Cobelskill Centre,.....	619	Richmondville,.....	619
Conesville,.....	623	Schoharie Court House,.....	632
Esperance,.....	632	Sharon,.....	643
Franklinton,.....	630	Sharon Centre,.....	643
Fultonham,.....	623	Sloansville,.....	632
Gallupville,.....	632	Smithton,.....	615
Gardnersville,.....	642	Summit Four Corners,.....	645
Gilboa,.....	615	Waldensville,.....	632
Hunters Land,.....	630		

### ERRATA.

On page 117, under cut, instead of *North* read *South* view. It is the view of Guy Park as seen from the Erie canal.

On page 182, for *the remotest parts*, read *their remotest part*.

On page 194, for fighting a just cause, read fighting *in* a just cause. On the same page, for *messenger* of death, read *messengers* of death.

On page 195, fourth line from top, for *Bunker*, read *Yankee*.

On page 374, first line, after neighbor insert a comma.

On page 615, under post offices in Broome, for *Livingston*, read *Livingstonville*.

# HISTORY OF SCHOHARIE COUNTY.

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## CHAPTER I.

The *border wars* of New York, in the great struggle with England for American *nationality*, originated some of the most thrilling incidents that ever did or ever can stamp the page of history. Many of those transpired in that part of Albany county now known as Schoharie; while events of no less interest were enacting in Tryon, and other frontier counties. Some of them have already been published, but there are not a few, especially of those which occurred in the Schoharie settlements, that have either not been presented to the American reader at all, or if they have, but partially and inaccurately so.

Schoharie is the present name of a county, a town, a village, and a river, in the state of New York. The geographical position of the county, its division into towns, &c., will be given in a subsequent chapter of this work. The word *Schoharie*, is aboriginal, and signifies, agreeable to published definitions, *drift*, or *flood-wood*. The author has spared no little pains to arrive at the origin and true meaning of this word. The word *Schoharie*, or the word from which that was derived, when originated, not only signified *flood-wood*, but a certain body of flood-wood. At a distance of about half a mile above the bridge which now crosses the Schoharie in the present town of Middleburgh, two small streams run into the river directly opposite each other. The one on the west side, coming from a north-west course, was formerly



called the Line kill, being the northern boundary line of the first Vrooman Patent—which instrument embraced that part of the town of Fulton, now called Vrooman's Land. The other stream is called Stony creek, and runs into the Schoharie from a south-east course. John M. Brown, Esq., in a pamphlet history of Schoharie, published in 1823, attributes to this stream, which he calls the little Schoharie, the origin of the latter word. The two streams mentioned, falling into the Schoharie at that place, produced in the latter a counter current, which caused a lodgment of drift-wood at every high water, directly above. The banks of the river there were no doubt studded at that period with heavy growing timber, which served as abutments for the formation of a natural bridge. I judge so from the fact, that between that place and the bridge below, on the west bank, may now be seen a row of elm stumps of gigantic growth. At what period the timber began to accumulate at that place, is unknown; but it was doubtless at a date far anterior to the settlement of the Schoharie valley, by the aborigines of which we have any certain knowledge. At the time the Indians located in the valley, who were the owners of the soil when the Germans and Dutch first settled there, tradition says there were thousands of loads of wood in this wooden pyramid. How far it extended on the flats on either side is uncertain, they being at that place uncommonly wide; but across the river it is said to have been higher than a house of ordinary dimensions, and to have served the natives the purposes of a bridge; who, when crossing, could not see the water through it. One tradition says Schoharie signifies *to take across or carry over*; while another tradition, from an equally creditable source, gives its literal meaning to be, *the meeting of two waters in a third*—both referring, beyond doubt, to the drift-wood in question, and its locality. This *mausoleum* of the forest sugar-tree, gnarled oak, and lofty pine, was called by the Indians who dwelt in its immediate vicinity, *to-wos-scho-hor*,\* the accent falling

\* I give the orthography of this word as it sounded when spoken by Mrs. Susannah, widow of Martin Van Slyck. At an interview in 1837, I found Mrs. Van Slyck quite intelligent, and possessed of a very retentive memory.



on the third and fourth syllables. From that word has been derived the present word Schoharie, the first two syllables having been entirely dropped, while another has been added in its Anglicisement. Several years ago I saw an ugly shaped glass bottle in Schoharie, said to have been imported from London by John Lawyer, the first merchant among the German settlers. His name and the place of his residence were stamped upon the bottle in English letters, the latter being there spelled *Shoary*. Many of the old German people of that county, at the present day, pronounce it *Shuckary*, which, it will be perceived, differs nearly as much from the sound of the word as now written, as that does from the sound of the word here given as the original.

At what period the aborigines located who were occupying the Schoharie flats when the Germans and Dutch first settled upon them, is unknown. Judge Brown, in the pamphlet to which I have alluded, informs us that the first Indian settlement was made by Ka-righ-on-don-tee,\* a French Indian prisoner, who had taken

She formerly dwelt in Vrooman's Land, near where the bridge of drift-wood had been—could once converse with the natives in their own dialect, and still retains many of their words. She gave the word to which the note refers, as the name by which they called the natural bridge—by whom she had often heard it spoken. The author is indebted to the kindness of this lady and her tenacious memory, for several interesting facts tradition has preserved, relating to the early settlement of Vrooman's Land by the whites, she being a granddaughter of the first Vrooman settler; and also for several incidents worthy of record which transpired during the revolution.

\* At a personal interview with the venerable patriot Brown, in Sept. 1837, he pronounced this word as though written Kar-cek-won-don-tee. I adopt his written orthography, however, with the difference only of ending it *ee*, believing it to be sufficiently correct. At this interview he assured the author that on the 5th of the following November, he would be ninety-two years old. Although his faculties, mental and bodily, were failing him, still we are indebted to his good humor and hospitality for some explanations of his pamphlet, and for much other matter not contained in that. Reading his pamphlet to him, and questioning him about customs which were in vogue in his earlier years, he seemed almost inspired with new life—his spirits, animation and memory revived, and he was enabled to relate many anecdotes, which, to use his own words, “he had not thought of in fifty years before.” Mr. Brown and his amiable consort were both sociable and urbane, and I spent nearly a day very agreeably with them. Brown was married at twenty-five to a Miss Hager, of Brakabeen, Schoharie county, with whom he lived

for a wife a Mohawk squaw; that his father-in-law gave him a part of those flats to remove him from the presence of the Mohawk Indians, by whom he had been made prisoner, as they bore a deadly hatred to the Canada Indians, and in a drunken frolic might kill him; that families from the Mohawk, Mohegan, Tuscarora, Delaware, and Oneida tribes there joined him, so that a new tribe, of which he was principal chief, was formed, numbering at one time about three hundred warriors.

Karighondontee was probably a Canadian chief of some celebrity, who had been taken prisoner by the Mohawks in one of the bloody wars, which the animosity existing between the Canadian Indians and the Five Nations was continually originating. As speculation alone can furnish any thing like a beginning to the first settlement of Schoharie by the natives known as the

thirty-eight years. He had nine children by that marriage, and several of them are now settled near him in Carlisle. Mrs. Brown, his present wife is, if memory serves me, twenty-two years younger than her husband. She was a Van Arnein from below the Helleberg, and has been married about twenty-six years. Her father was a captain of militia in the continental service. Brown had no issue by his second wife. He was among the first settlers in Carlisle, and, in common with the pioneers of that day, endured his full share of privations and hardships. He was a firm patriot, and a captain of the Tryon county militia in the revolution; he received a cut in one knee with a drawing-knife during the war, from which he ever after went very lame. Subsequent to receiving the injury mentioned, he sent a messenger to Gov. G. Clinton, informing him of his lameness; at the same time signifying a wish to resign his commission. He received in return a very civil letter from His Excellency, in which he expressed much regret at his misfortune; assuring him also that his services could not be dispensed with, or his commission returned; but that if he could not walk to command his company he, (the governor,) would send him a horse that he might ride.

When Otsego county was organized, Brown was one of the commissioners for laying out several public roads in that county; and when Schoharie county was formed, he was again called on to discharge the same duties. The commissioners associated with him in Otsego county, were Mr. Hudson and Col. Herrick, who together laid out twenty-seven public roads. Mr. Brown was appointed by the governor and council of appointment, third judge of the first bench of the Schoharie county courts. He was three times a candidate for member of assembly, and once lost his election by only *two* votes. Considering his limited opportunities in early life, he was an intelligent man. That he never obtained a pension while many others less deserving did, was to him a source of no little mortification and grief. Judge Brown died in the fall of 1838 or 39.

Schoharie tribe, save what has been already related; I trust the reader will indulge me in carrying it a little farther. The revolution in England in the latter part of the seventeenth century, which placed William and Mary upon that throne, was followed by a general war in which several nations of Europe were engaged. Nor were the colonies of America idle spectators of the tragedy. From Europe the grand theatre of that war, the crimson art was brought into the wilds of North America. The Canadas, then French colonies, with the Algonquin Indians within their own territory, were fiercely engaged with the British colonies and the Five Indian Nations then their allies, along the borders of New England and New York. The Mohegans,\* who, as we have already seen, made a part of the Schoharie tribe, it is not improbable were engaged in considerable numbers with the people of New England, and at the close of the war or soon after joined Karighondontee: as I suppose that chief to have been made prisoner in that war. The Mohegans, to whom war or the chase may have discovered the Schoharie valley, finding it to be a country sparsedly settled—equal in beauty to the banks of the Thames in Connecticut, from whence they emigrated—where game was plenty, and where, too, they would not be surrounded by the “pale faces” and amenable to their laws, may have been induced to settle there; or they may there have sought an asylum from motives not dissimilar to those which brought hither the Mohawk.

I suppose the time of Karighondontee's settlement to have been within about twenty years of the first German settlement in Schoharie; and conclude so from the fact that the tribe was not then more formidable in numbers; for the Tuscaroras† could not have joined it until about the time the Germans located, as they did not leave Carolina in numbers till near that period.

\* A part of the Mohegan and Stockbridge Indians, migrated and joined the Five Nations before the revolution.—*Morse's Gazetteer*. .

† This tribe came from North Carolina about 1712, and joined the confederacy of the Five Nations, themselves making the sixth. See Lewiston, where they still have a village.—*Spafford's Gazetteer of N. Y.*

It may not perhaps be improper to say a few words respecting the Six Nations of Indians. At the time our pilgrim fathers first landed in America, a confederacy existed between the five most powerful Indian Nations then living in the state of New York. They were called by the French the Iroquois; by the English the Confederates, or Five Nations; by the Dutch, more particularly those in the Mohawk valley, the Maquaas; and by themselves, Aganuschioni, or United People. Their government in many respects was republican. At what time and for what purposes this confederacy was formed, is unknown. It may have originated in conquest, the weaker nations in turn being subdued by the most powerful one; or, from a natural desire to resist and conquer a common foe, that existed from the alliance of other powerful nations. Whatever may have originated this union of Indian strength, it must have existed for a great length of time; for when the Europeans came here, it is said the Confederates all spoke a similar language. The Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca nations formed the confederacy—the Tuscaroras joining them, as has been shown, at a subsequent period. Says the historian Trumbull, "Each of the Five Nations was subdivided into three tribes or families. They distinguished themselves by three different ensigns, the Tortoise, the Bear, and the Wolf. Whenever the sachems, or any of the old men, signed any public paper, they traced upon it the mark of their respective family." The same author, giving Roger Williams for authority, says the word *Mohawk* imports *cannibal*, and is derived from the word *moho*, to eat. This is undoubtedly a popular error. The Mohawk nation took its name from the river along which it dwelt, called the Mohawk's river—as the Dutch have it, the Maquaas' river—which signifies, in plain English, the muskrat's river. Many ancient Indian land titles have so called the stream in English, writing it in the possessive case; and to this day muskrats are numerous along its shores, hundreds being killed in the valley at every spring freshet.

The Mohawk, which was the most eastern of the Five Nations, had in the latter part of its existence as a nation, three castles—



all of which were on the south side of the Mohawk river. The lower, or eastern castle, was at Icanderago,\* afterwards called Fort Hunter, near the junction of the Mohawk and Schoharie rivers; the central or Canajoharie castle, as then called, stood on the brink of the prominence at the east end of the present village of Fort Plain; which hill was called by the Indians *Tu-ragh-jores*, signifying *hill of health*;† and the upper and most western was in the present town of Danube, not far distant from St. Johnsville. The Caughnawagas, who resided at the Tribes' hill, opposite Icanderago, and the ancient village which still bears their name, were a family of the Wolf tribe of Mohawks.

When the Dutch first located at Albany, they courted the friendship of the Confederates; and by furnishing them with fire arms and ammunition to war against their northern enemies, they secured their trade and friendship—the latter proving of most essential service to the colony of New York, in her subsequent wars with Canada. At the beginning of the American revolution, a majority of the Confederates, owing in a great measure to the unbounded influence of the Johnson family over them, remained true to the British interest, removed to Canada with the Johnsons and Butlers, and fought for Britain—proving a terrible scourge to our frontier settlements. Most of the Oneidas, however, and a part of the Tuscaroras, either remained neutral or sided with the Americans; rendering them, as guides and runners, very important services; on which account lands have been reserved to them in the state. The Oneida Reservation is in Vernon, Oneida county, and the Tuscarora in Lewiston, Niagara county, where they still have villages. Their numbers are fast

\* McAuley, in his History of New York, gives this as the Indian name for the estuary of the Schoharie river.

† Peter J. Wagner, Esq., who learned the site of this castle, the name of the hill and its signification, from Col. John Frey, an early settler in the valley, who spoke the Mohawk dialect well. A territory extending from Spraker's Basin to Fort Plain, a distance of six miles, was originally called Canajoharie; indeed the town of Canajoharie now covers nearly the same extent on the river, and the castle stood on land still within the extreme limits of that town.

diminishing, and their national character departing; and the time is probably not very distant when it will be said of this once powerful confederacy, which often led to victory its thousands of warriors—it *has* been, yet *is* not. If such a writer as Washington Irving would write a history of the North American Indians, the world would owe him a debt of gratitude. Surely such a work would not detract from the merited literary fame of the author of *Columbus*, to say nothing of the well-emptied saddle-bags of that splenetic old gentleman, Sir Deidrich Knickerbocker.

The Schoharie tribe of Indians seems to have been made up of the fractional parts, or refugees from different nations, some of which may have been compelled to flee from the council fires and hunting grounds of their fathers; and perhaps might not have been inaptly termed by other nations, a tribe of refuge, since it corresponded in some degree to the cities of refuge established by Moses, among the tribes of Israel. That Schoharie was settled if only for indefinite periods to suit the convenience of the natives for hunting and fishing, long before its settlement by Karighondontee, there can remain no doubt; for to this day are found many flint arrow-heads, and not unfrequently other relics of savage ingenuity, which the contiguity of the whites at the time he settled was calculated to obviate the necessity of their retaining in use; for Schenectada and Albany were both within thirty miles of his location by the paths then traveled. It is true, bows and arrows were still used by some of the Indians after the Germans arrived there, but many of them possessed fire-arms and well knew how to use them long before.

It is astonishing to what perfection the aborigines of the United States had carried the manufacture of their wooden and stone instruments for defence and domestic utility, before the Europeans found their way hither; since history informs us that they were not the possessors of even a knife, or any instrument of iron. To look at a flint arrow-head, see the regularity of its shape, and to what delicate proportions it has been wrought from so hard and brittle a substance, it seems incredible that it could have been formed by art, without the aid of other implements than those



of stone. One would almost suppose the Indian to have been capable of softening the *flinty rock* by some chemical agent, previous to its being wrought into such beautiful forms. The *cabinet* of the antiquarian will exhibit them of various dimensions and a variety of colors; pipes, hatchets, wedges, and culinary vessels, all ingeniously formed from different kinds of stone, are likewise often found at the present day near the site of ancient Indian villages—giving additional evidence of the perfection to which necessity will carry certain arts.

The abundance of Indian relics formerly found there, the smallness of the tribe and its comparatively brief existence, are facts on which I predicate an opinion, that the Mohawks and Delawares, in times of peace, dwelt in and about Schoharie. This conclusion seems not only plausible but very probable, as the former, who were called *the true heads of the Confederacy*, lived along the Mohawk valley, and the latter inhabited along the Delaware—the Schoharie valley being to them the natural route of intercommunication.

Some twenty-five years ago, there might have been seen nearly a mile north of the Schoharie Court House, a deep pit, in which was observed a heavy, upright, wooden frame. Its location was on a knoll, in an old apple orchard upon the farm now owned by John L. Swart: which orchard seems, at least in appearance, to merit an existence coeval with the first German settlements. For what purpose that frame was there sunk, or by whom, tradition breathes not even a whisper. Judge Brown said he remembered having seen it, but assured the author that persons then living in the vicinity much older than himself, could give no clew to its origin. This artificial cavern, which is said to have been apparently fifteen or twenty feet deep, by those who looked into it, was discovered at the time alluded to, by the accidental caving in of the earth near one corner of it. The opening has long since been closed, without an interior examination of the pit. Its origin must be left entirely to conjecture. It may have been an underground place of refuge; or, it may have served as a depository for treasures; or,—but I leave to the curious the solving of its mysteries.

Indians have generally believed in the existence of a God or *Great Spirit*, and a *future state*. They worshiped a plurality of imaginary *deities*, such as the heavenly bodies, fire, water and the like—indeed any thing mysterious or superior to themselves. In New England, says Trumbull, *although they believed in one supreme God*, or a being of infinite goodness, *still they paid most of their devotion to the evil spirit, whom they called Hobomocko*: thinking, no doubt, that if they made peace with their enemy, they were safe.

Little is known of the Schoharie tribe of Indians until the Germans came into their midst. Their general customs and habits were as similar to those of neighboring tribes, as the multigenerous nature of their own would allow. The customs of the Carolina, Connecticut, New York and Pennsylvania Indians, from which the Schoharie tribe was principally composed, no doubt differed as much, perhaps more, than would those of an equal number of the present white population, if collected from the same sections of the Union. The refugees from some of the tribes lived together when their numbers would admit, and they doubtless kept up in a measure their own national character. Time is required in all cases, where people from distant countries form a settlement, to sink into one general custom or habit, the diversified manners of their native land. The Mohegans settled near the mouth of the Little Schoharie kill in the present town of Middleburgh, and were living separate from the main body of the tribe, long after Conrad Weiser and his German brethren located in their immediate vicinity. One good reason for this, was the fact that they spoke a different language from the principal part of the tribe. They also had a small castle near the present residence of Henry Mattice.

It is said by historians that Indians are invariably born *white*: if so, I must presume this freak of nature found its way to the Schoharie tribe. "Indian lovers generally live together on trial before marriage:" and I have no reason to believe it was otherwise here. Among the Five Nations, history assures us, polyga-

my was not customary, but the Indians in general, Solomon like, kept many concubines—and never thought they had too many women. As the Schoharie tribe was deficient in numbers, I readily conclude it placed as much dependence on *women* to increase the number of its warriors, as did any of the Six Nations. In Virginia, it is said, the Indians had altars of stone whereon they offered a sacrifice of blood, deer's suet and *tobacco*. Now I dare not suppose that Karighondontee or any of his tribe were equally religious; but I may say, I have never heard that any people ever appropriated tobacco to a much better use—surely it were far better thus to burn, than masticate it: while its fumes, I do not scruple to believe, would ascend to heaven with as grateful odor—if neatness and health are called in question—as from the lips of that individual, whose taste is so perverted as to smoke it.

That the Schoharie Indians had many customs and habits in common with other nations, the author has obtained satisfactory proof: such as the burial of treasures with the dead—holding councils when on the eve of some momentous undertaking—celebrating victories—face painting—(from whom *some modern ladies* have possibly borrowed the disgusting habit)—scalping the fallen foe—wearing trinkets about their persons—compelling their women to do the drudgery—requiting hospitality with kindness, and secretly revenging insult with the tomahawk. What civilized people call *society* was rarely ever found among the aborigines of the United States. Unless engaged in war or the chase, their favorite employ—they led lives of indolence and inactivity. A custom once prevalent among the Indians of New England and New York, was that of burying the dead in a sitting posture facing the east: it was also customary among the Indians of eastern New England, for such as had taken prisoners, to kill as many of them as they had relatives or friends killed in battle.—See *Drake's Church's life of Benjamin Church*.

Besides the village of the Mohegans already located, the Schoharie tribe had several others: one of which was on the farm formerly owned by Alexander Vrooman—on the west side of the

river. Nearly opposite that, on the other side of the river, they had another ; and a distance of several miles farther up the valley, on the farm of the late Peter P. Snyder, a third. At each of the two former they had a small castle ; and at the latter, where they dwelt for many years after the two northern villages were abandoned, they had a burying ground. Those villages were all within four miles of the present site of the Court House. Within the recollection of some now living, twenty-one wigwams were yet standing upon the Snyder farm ; and a few old apple trees still to be seen there, are supposed to have been planted by the natives. Near this orchard many burials are said to have been made at their place of sepulture : nor, indeed, were the manes of nature's children without companions, to share the pot-age\* taken along at their death ; as a portion of the consecrated ground was set apart, for the defunct slaves of the early Germans.

The fifth, and most important village of the tribe, where dwelt Karighondontee and his principal chiefs, was in Vrooman's land : where they had a strong castle, and a place of burial. This castle was built by John Becker, who received from Sir William Johnson, as agent for the British government, *eighty pounds* for its erection. It was built at the commencement of the French war, and constructed of hewn timber. The Indians held some four hundred acres of land around it, which they leased for several years. Contiguous to this castle, along both sides of the river, could have been counted at one time seventy huts ; and relics of savage ingenuity are now often plowed up near its site. An angle of land, occasioned by a bend in the river, on which this castle stood, was called the *Wilder Hook*, by the Dutch who settled near it, and signified *the Indian's Corner*. Among the old people in that vicinity, it is still known by the same name.

The Indians gave names to most of the mountains and promin-

\* It was not only customary for the aborigines of this country to bury the implements of war, and treasures of the warrior with his body ; but also a kettle of food, such as beans or venison, to serve him on his journey to the delectable hunting grounds, whither he believed himself going. There he expected to find plenty of wild game, handsome women, and revel eternally in voluptuousness.

ent hills in the county, among which were the following: On the west side of the river, directly opposite the brick church in Middleburgh, is a mountain rising several hundred feet, and covered with timber of stunted growth. The traveler will readily notice this, as being the highest of the surrounding peaks, which hem in the river and valley for a considerable distance on either side. This mountain the natives called *Ou-con-ge-na*, which signified, *Rattle-snake Mountain*, or *Mountain of Snakes*. It was literally covered with rattle-snakes in former times. The next peak above on the same side of the river, which has a very bold termination towards the valley, they called *O-nis-ta-gra-wa*, and spoke it as though written *O-nis-ta-graw-waugh!* It signified the *Corn Mountain*. Between that and the river was the Wilder Hook: at which place the flats are well adapted to the cultivation of Indian corn. It was this consideration which gave to this mountain its significant name. The next hill above the Onistagrawa, now known as Spring Hill, the Indians called *To-wok-now-ra*—its signification is unknown.

At Middleburgh, two valleys meet; the one through which the Schoharie wends its way, and the other through which the Little Schoharie kill runs some distance before it empties into the former. Consequently, on the south-east side of the river as it there courses, the mountain ridge which confines the river to its limits on the eastern side, suddenly terminates, and again appears east of Middleburgh village. The termination of the hill alluded to, which lies south-east of the Onistagrawa and distant perhaps two miles—was called by the Mohegans who dwelt at its base, the *Mo-he-gon-ter*, and signified *Falling Off*, or *Termination of the Mohegan Hill*. It served not only to designate the locality, and preserve the name of the Connecticut Indians, but, like many of their words which have a twofold meaning; it denoted a hill terminating at a valley. A fraction of the Stockbridge tribe of Indians, who emigrated from Massachusetts, also dwelt near the Mohegans.

I have no data by which to estimate the whole number of Schoharie Indians, except the statement in Brown's pamphlet,



which sets down the number of warriors at about three hundred. Now by supposing that each of those warriors, on an average, had two women, that there were two children to each woman—that there were fifty men unfit for warriors from age or infirmity, and as many old women; the tribe would then number *two thousand two hundred souls*. This estimate may be thought too large; but if so, the reader has the same right and means to lessen its numbers, that I have to increase them. And whether he is a Yankee or not, he may *guess* at their numbers with impunity; although it is hardly a supposable case, still there may have been here and there a warrior to whom Cupid had not revealed Ovid's art; there are *few* of nature's children who are strangers to love.

The coat of arms, or ensign of the Schoharie tribe, was a *turtle* and a *snake*. Figures representing those animals, they were careful to place on all deeds or writings—which were to prove an evidence of *faith*. Nor were they confined to placing them on paper or parchment; for whenever they deeded land, trees serving as bounds or land-marks, bore the characteristic emblem of the tribe.

Brown enumerates the five following foot-paths as being in use by the Schoharie Indians, when the whites first settled among them. The *first* he mentions began at Catskill, and followed the kill of that name up to its source at the *Vlaie*, from whence it continued down to Middleburgh. Over a part of this path now runs the Loonenburg turnpike. The *second* began at Albany and led over the Helleberg, down Foxes creek valley, and terminated in Schoharie. By this path the Germans traveled, who first settled Schoharie. The *old road*, as now called, from thence to Albany, follows very nearly the route of that path. The *third* commenced at Garlock's dorf, and led to Schenectada through Duanesburgh. By this path, the Dutch who first settled in Vrooman's Land, proceeded from Schenectada. This path was much used for several years by the Schoharie Germans, who went to that ancient city with grists upon their backs to get milling done! The *fourth* led from Kneiskern's dorf down the Schoharie to Sloansville, from thence through the towns of Charleston and



Glen to Cadaughrity and ended at Fort Hunter. This path was much traveled by the natives, who went from the Mohawk to the Susquehanna valley. The *fifth* led from Kneiskern's dorf north-west to Canajoharie. This path, says Brown, was much traveled by the early Germans, who often went to visit relatives at the German Flats. It continued in full use, he adds, until after the year 1762, at which time Sir William Johnson reviewed a brigade of militia, of which he was general—near the upper Indian castle of the Mohawks. Besides those enumerated, the Indians must have had other paths, perhaps of less notoriety, leading in different directions from Schoharie. One traversed not a little by the Indian hunter, led directly up the Schoharie to near its source, and from thence to the Susquehanna and Genesee valleys. While another of some importance to the hunter, must have led up the Cobelskill to its source, and from thence to Otsego lake.

It may justly be said, that *religion* has peopled by the whites, the greater part of North America; for many of the first European immigrants came to this goodly heritage to find a place where they could worship Jehovah as seemed to them proper and desirable. True, the prospect of realizing the desires of Ortugal, induced many to settle in Spanish America; but Catholicism was the handmaid of lucre, and aided not a little in conquering and civilizing Mexico, so far as that country has been civilized; it must be acknowledged, however, that civilization has advanced tardily in all Spanish America. This is owing no doubt to two obvious reasons: the general indolence of the inhabitants, (their wealth being derived directly from the precious metals instead of agriculture,) and the fact that the Catholic religion is less favorable to civilization, than is the Protestant.

After the throne of England had been vacated by the death of William and Mary, Queen Anne ascended it, and as her predecessors had done, she tolerated the Protestant religion. It was often the case in former times, that when one form of religious worship was tolerated in a kingdom of Europe, and laws were enacted to compel all to conform to it, many who had scruples about

adopting it, at the sacrifice of judgment and feeling, fled to other countries where their own religion prevailed. It was bigotry and Catholicism, which drove the ancestors of General Marion from France to South Carolina. The grandfather of Marion was a French Protestant: by the authorities of France he *was banished to perpetual exile*, and notified by letter, that if found in the kingdom after ten days from the date had transpired, his life would be forfeited, his body consumed by fire, and the ashes scattered on the winds of heaven. I have mentioned this case to show the reader the nature of the persecution, which tended in a great measure to people the United States.

The *Puritans*, as the Plymouth, Massachusetts, pioneers were called, fled with their pastor, the Rev. John Robinson, in the year 1607, from England to Amsterdam in Holland; from thence they soon after removed to Leyden. From the latter place, in the year 1620, they went to Southampton in England, from whence they embarked for America on the 5th day of August of the same year, and after a long, tedious voyage, anchored in Cape Cod harbor, on the 10th day of the following November. The colony which European persecution there planted, although several times on the eve of annihilation, was the means of peopling all New England.

Queen Anne, who received the crown of England in the year 1702, knowing that the Germans were in general peaceable, loyal subjects, and lovers of liberty from principle—anxious to increase the population of her American colonies, held out strong inducements to this hardy and industrious race of people to become British subjects. She offered to give them lands, if they would settle on the frontier of certain colonies, and furnish them at the beginning with necessary tools, provisions, &c. What added to the inducement, they could there practice their own form of religious worship.

There is a charm in the word *liberty*, that converts a desert wild into a paradise, and severs the cords of the fraternal, social circle. The generous offers of Queen Anne induced thousands to bid a final farewell to the land of their nativity—cross the foam-

ing Atlantic, and erect their altars of worship in the wilds of America, thousands of miles from the luring places to which they were known in childhood.

Schoharie, with the exception of its Indian inhabitants, was first settled by the Germans and Dutch, and to religion and the love of liberty is that settlement mostly to be attributed. In saying Schoharie, I allude to all the settlements first made in Schoharie county, without distinction of towns; as a territory of many miles in extent, now making a part of several towns, was, at first, known by no other name than that of Schoharie. I find it somewhat difficult to harmonize the contradictory statements, tending to fix the precise year in which the Germans first arrived in that valley. Brown says "they sailed on new year's day in the year 1710, from some port on the Rhine, down that river to Holland, from whence they sailed to England; that being there further provided, they sailed for America; and after a tedious voyage in which a great many died, they landed at New York on the 14th day of June, 1712; having been one year five months and several days [over two years,] on their journey; that they were then sent up the Hudson river to East and West Camp, (so called from the circumstance of their having encamped there,) where they wintered in ground and log huts.—That from there the spring following, they went to Albany, from whence some found their way to Schoharie, after a journey of four days by an Indian foot path, bearing upon their backs tools and provisions with which they had been provided by agents of the queen." Brown is doubtless in error about the time the emigrants were coming from Germany to New York; it could not have been *upwards of two years*, as it would seem by his data.

Many of the aged people with whom I have conversed on this subject, agree in fixing the date of their departure from Leyden in Holland, as early as 1709, while some others name that year as the traditionary one in which they first reached Schoharie. A record in the Lutheran church at Schoharie, states that Abraham Berg, from Hessen, came to America in 1709, but the record was made many years subsequent to that date, and may be in-

accurate ; recording the time of arrival here, instead of departure from Hessen. From a comparison of all the evidence collected on the subject, I believe they left Germany late in 1709, arrived at New York in 1710, and the following year went to Schoharie. Smith's history of New York informs us, that General Hunter, who had been appointed governor of the province, arrived at New York on the fourteenth day of June, 1710, bringing with him near three thousand Palatines, who, the year before, had fled to England from the rage of persecution in Germany. That "many of these people seated themselves in the city of New York, where they built a Lutheran church ; others settled on a tract of several thousand acres, in the manor of Livingston, where they still have a village called the Camp, which is one of the pleasantest situations on Hudson's river ; right opposite, on the west bank are many other families of them. Some went into Pennsylvania, and by the favorable accounts of the country, which they transmitted to Germany, were instrumental to the transmigration of many thousands of their countrymen into that province. Queen Anne's liberality to these people," he adds, "was not more beneficial to them than serviceable to this colony. They have behaved themselves peaceably, and lived with great industry. Many are rich ; all are Protestants, and well affected to the government : the same may be said of those who have settled amongst us, and planted the lands westward of Albany. We have not the least ground for jealousy with respect to them." It will be observed, that the arrival at New York of the Germans by whom Schoharie was undoubtedly settled, was on the same day of the same month, two years earlier than the date given by Brown, as the one on which they arrived. There can remain little doubt, that the time of their arrival as given by Smith is correct. Another writer, *Spafford*, in his *Gazetteer of New York*, speaking of Livingston's manor, says : "In the year 1710, agreeably to an arrangement with Queen Anne of England, the proprietor conveyed a tract of six thousand acres adjoining the Hudson, from the south-eastern part of the manor, to a

number of Palatines, who had served in her armies, and were now driven from Germany by the French army.

The same writer, speaking of Germantown, Columbia county, in which town is the village of East Camp, says:—"In June, 1710, seventy families of poor Palatine soldiers who had served in the army of Queen Anne, by whom they were hired of the Electorate of the Palatinate, arrived at New York, the most of whom soon removed to these lands, then included in Livingston's manor." The reader will here understand why these people were called Palatines. Palatine is a term which was formerly given to a prince, and probably is still, in some parts of Germany. He was invested with royal privileges to preside over a certain territory, called a Palatinate; hence emigrants from such countries in Germany, as are subject to the government or direction of a Palatine, have been called Palatines or Palatinates. "In 1725," continues Spafford, "according to an arrangement of King George I. with the proprietor, letters patent were granted to certain persons belonging to the settlement of East Camp, as it was then called, as trustees for the whole, conveying the right of soil in perpetuity for the use of said inhabitants. And the grant seems to have been well devised, with the whole conditions on which it was made. Forty acres were directed to be appropriated to the use of a church and the maintenance of a school, and the residue to be equally divided among the inhabitants, which was faithfully performed by the trustees. This little colony received many marks of the kindness, care and beneficence of Queen Anne, under whose special patronage it was first planted. The country was then wholly wild, and the first encampments were distinguished by local names. Hence came East Camp, a more general name of three little lodges in this town; and West Camp, the name of a similar settlement on the opposite side of the river, now in Saugerties, Ulster county. The settlements first commenced by three small lodges of temporary huts, each of which was placed under the superintendence of some principal man, from whom they took their names, with the addition of *dorf*, a German word for village. Hence Weiser's



dorf, Kneiskern's dorf, names now disused, except by a very few of the ancient Germans."

According to Spafford's account it would appear as though the first settlers at the Camps, had been hired by Queen Anne to serve in her wars. But the other published accounts, and tradition, which seems not to have slumbered on this subject, unite in ascribing their emigration from Germany chiefly to religious oppression. It is not improbable that some of the most warlike of those Germans, may have aided the colonies and Iroquois in the war they were then waging with Canada ;—a distinguished historian does indeed say that some of them were so engaged ; (*See Bancroft's U. S.* vol. iii, p. 221)—but that those who tarried at the Camps left their native land for that purpose, seems hardly admissible, from the fact, that male and female, old and young, great and small were included in this group of immigrants ; the major part of which would have been sorry materials for an army. He must be in error about the number of the first settlers, unless two different parties arrived at the Camps during the same year, which is not improbable ; as more than seventy families, which he gives for their whole number there, removed to Schoharie ; at which time many families settled along the Mohawk river. It is highly probable, that of those who arrived, seventy families at least remained at the Camps, and became permanent settlers.

Few incidents worthy of notice, in the long journey of these emigrants, have been preserved. They are said to have embarked from Plymouth, a port somewhat celebrated for the embarkation of Europeans to this continent. While the ship was lying at anchor some distance from the shore, awaiting for a fair wind or sailing orders, with the emigrants on board, six of them went to land in a boat to make some necessary purchases. Only one name of the six is now remembered, that was Becker. He was a relative of the ancestors of the Beckers, who now live on Fox's creek, in the present town of Schoharie. After making purchases, they put off to regain the ship ; but having a gale of wind to encounter, which had sprung up while they were on shore, the boat capsized and its crew were all buried in the raging billows. With this unhappy commencement, it is but natural to

suppose their surviving friends anticipated a voyage across the Atlantic, fraught with difficulty and danger: indeed such it proved; for it was protracted by adverse winds to a length of months, and rendered truly appalling, when, as provisions began to fail them, they saw grim death, through all the horrors of starvation, staring them in the face. Before they reached New York, crumbs were sought for by the half starved children in every nook and corner, and when fortune thus discovered to them the scanty object of their search, no matter how filthy or stale, it was considered a God-send and greedily devoured. Several passengers died on the voyage: one old lady, who had been ill of consumption for some time, died and was consigned to the deep at the Narrows, below New York. If several died on the journey, it is not certain that the whole number of the emigrants was less at their final debarkation, than it was when they left the land of their fathers, as I have to record the fact, that the rule of ancient arithmetic, which subtracts one from one and leaves *two*, was not unfrequently exemplified during the passage. By the by, that is a valuable rule in peopling all new countries.

Soon after they landed at New York, they were sent up the Hudson to the Camps; (with the exception of those who became permanent settlers in the city, and those who went to Pennsylvania;) where they made a temporary location. As they did not arrive at New York until the middle of June, it will be observed that the season had too far advanced to allow those who intended to become frontier settlers, or citizen farmers, to select an approved location, and raise their sustenance for that season: they therefore went into quarters to await the return of Spring. They erected temporary huts, settling in seven squads or messes, each with a head man or commissary, through whom they received their provisions from an agent of the Queen, until they were permanently located. Conrad Weiser, Hartman Winteker, John Hendrick Kneiskern, Elias Garlock, Johannes George Smidt and William Fox were six of the number; and as John Lawyer became one after their arrival at Schoharie, he may have made the seventh. The several settlements over which they presided, were

called dorfs, signifying towns. Each of the said "list men," as Judge Brown termed them, (from the fact, that each had enrolled on a list or schedule, the names of every man, woman and child belonging to his beat;) was obliged to make careful report, from time to time, to the royal agent, of all changes in his dorf; of its approaching wants, etc. How these honest, good natured, simple people, spent the greater part of a year at the Camps, this deponent has been unable to learn; but as they possessed the characteristic good nature of their mother country,—were fond of athletic exercises, not to the exclusion of fumigation however, he supposes, as the Queen's punctual agent did not allow them to anticipate much care or concern about their temporal affairs, that they "drove dull cares away," by what their descendants term frolicking: and that although they were in a strange land, they resolved it should be to them a land of social enjoyment. The reader is ready to ask, what means the term *frolicking* in this place? It means, as I have been assured by the descendants of those virtuous and happy people, the indulgence of certain propensities of the human heart to seek pleasure. They fiddled, they danced, they ran foot races; and groups were not unfrequently seen among them, jumping, wrestling, &c., in summer: while winter found them skating, or playing various kinds of plays, such as now sometimes make part of an evening's entertainment at a village party, in which *bussing*, that delectable finale to which they generally tend, bears a conspicuous part. Some sedate mortal, on whom life hangs heavily, may be ready to exclaim, "strange that a people who left their native land on account of religious persecution, should have allowed their children or any of their numbers, to indulge in such foolish propensities!" It is indeed strange; but no less strange than true, if they lived at the Camps as they afterwards did in Schoharie. One fact however, might be urged in mitigation of their wickedness, if such the reader terms it. Not a particle of *hypocrisy*, that ingredient so necessary in making up the human character at the present day, dwelt in the hearts of these people. The reader will remember, that I have not called them a *fashionable* people. Na-

turally honest themselves, they supposed others so, and had imbibed liberally those true German principles of nature, founded on a belief, that "there is a proper time for every purpose;" which bade them not look to the morrow, for that which rightly belonged to the present day; or anticipate the troubles to which man is heir, and which are so profusely scattered along his path. That there were many among those emigrants who lived pious and exemplary lives, not approving the course of their fellows, there can be no doubt.

At what time in the spring of 1711, those who had not chosen to remain at the Camps, moved up the river to Albany, is uncertain. It must have been as early as circumstances would allow. On their arrival at that Dutch city, they sent several individuals of their number into the Mohawk and Schoharie vallies, to spy out a good location for their permanent settlement. Perhaps it may be well to say a few words in this place, in explanation of the term Dutch. Emigrants from the German circles, were originally called Germans or High Dutch; and indeed continued to be so called, long after their emigration to this country; while those from Holland or the United Provinces were called Dutch: or, in contra-distinction of the term High Dutch given the Germans, Low Dutch. Many persons of the present day, unacquainted with the geography of Europe, express surprise to hear the distinction of the terms German and Dutch made, supposing them synonymous. The German circles or states, and Dutch provinces, are as distinct countries, as are England and Scotland, perhaps more so; and their languages as little alike, as were formerly those of the latter countries. Nor indeed are the former under the same government, which is the case with the latter; and yet people express no surprise to hear the distinction of English and Scotch emigrants made, when those countries are in question. When the historian tells us that the Dutch settled at Albany, which was by them called *Willemstadt*, where they built Fort Orange; and at New York, then called *New Amsterdam*, in or about the year 1614, nearly one hundred years previous to the settlement of Schoharie; he dees not intend to be understood that

those places were settled by Germans, but by Hollanders or Dutch.

As the sections of the United States, originally peopled by the Dutch and Germans, received additional settlers from other countries, and conformed to the English language,—the whole assimilating by gradual process to new characteristics, as their old were reluctantly absolved; the sectional appellatives of all, whether English, Scotch, or Irish—Dutch, German, or Swiss, yielded to two simple terms, Yankee and Dutch.

The German messengers, with whom we parted company a short time since, deputed to Schoharie, were conducted by an Indian guide over the Helleberg\*, and on the second day they gained a commanding view of the flats along Fox's creek. They proceeded down that stream, until from one of the hills which skirt its lowlands, they gained a prospect of the Schoharie valley, at the place where Fox's creek runs into the Schoharie. There their vision was delighted by one of the most beautiful and picturesque scenes, with which nature has decorated the earth. They beheld the green flats of Schoharie, spread out before them like a beautiful, though neglected garden. To the west, directly opposite the mouth of said creek, their view was obstructed by a romantic mountain rising several hundred feet, and terminating in a bold cliff towards them. I regret that I have been unable to learn the original Indian name of that mountain: the Germans called it the Clipper berg, meaning the rocky mountain. I take the liberty of giving to it, the name of Karighondontee, intending by so doing to perpetuate the name of the Schoharie Indian tribe. On the summit of the Karighondontee, is a cultivated farm formerly owned by Henry Hamilton, Esq., an excursion to which often rewards the Rambler in the summer season, with one of the

\* On arriving upon this mountain, which is a spur of the Catskill mountains, those emigrants halted on several eminences to enjoy the rich prospect thus afforded. Helle—signifies light or clear, and berg—hill or mountain. Hence the appropriate name they gave it—Helleberg, *Prospect Hill* or *Sight-ly Mountain*. Helderberg, the Dutch orthography for this word, has, within a few years, very improperly gained place; its original German name being far more poetic and soft.



most enchanting views imaginable. Off to the right hand of the deputation, as they stood on the summit of the hill, near where it descends into the two valleys, on the north side of Fox's creek; they were enabled to catch a view of the great bend in the river, where it takes a more easterly course, immediately after receiving Cobel's kill. They did not long tarry to contemplate on the richness of the prospect, which the union of those three valleys, beautified as they then were by luxurious spring, was calculated to create. Perhaps there was no Mozart present, to catch inspiration from the wanton carol of the countless feathered musicians, by which they were surrounded: or Spurzheim to forestal the virtues,—perchance the hidden wealth, of the hilly protuberances which rose in romantic grandeur, on which side soever they gazed. The hill on which I have supposed the pilgrim messengers to have stood, and from which they caught a view of "the promised land," the Indians called Oxt-don-tee. After taking this hasty glance of the country before them, which they no doubt did with eyes and ears, if not mouths, open; they returned speedily to Albany, and reported progress to their anxious brethren. Would kind reader, I could serve you with the maiden speeches of those honest spies, who were among the first white men known to have trod upon Schoharie soil: but in the absence of such an intellectual treat, your own fertile imagination must create them. They were delivered before the immortal *seven*, who were the sanhedrim of the multitude, and one thing is certain: they were fraught with a prevailing argument against the entire Mohawk valley, which was not even allowed a hearing; and nearly the whole caravan,\* loaded down like so many pack horses with provisions and tools, without a vehicle of any kind, started forthwith for Schoharie.

The interval lands which the deputies had visited, were, at that time, to a great extent cleared or timberless, and presented

\* As the German settlements along the Mohawk were commenced about the same time with those of Schoharie, it is not improbable, that the relatives of the messengers sent up that river, awaited their return at Albany, and on their bringing a favorable report of the country, removed thither.

the appearance of a limited prairie: and few were the native inhabitants, who then dwelt upon them. These two considerations, no doubt, greatly influenced the hasty decision of the colonists.

Gentle reader, you, who ride perhaps in a gilded carriage, and think elliptic springs and a good road scarcely endurable, must not be offended when informed, that your great-great-grandmothers, (I am now speaking to the fair sex, of the uncontaminated descendants, of the primogenial pilgrims to the happy valley, not of Rasselas, but Schoharie;) clad in linsey-woolsey of limited length, bearing each in their arms an heir apparent, and each on their back a sack of provisions or unmentionables; set out on foot to make this long journey, upon an intricate Indian foot path.\* Would you ask why their husbands did not carry the burthens, thus imposed upon their amiable consorts? I have already said they had not a vehicle of any kind; nor indeed had they the aid of even a single horse; consequently the husbands and all the children able to bear burthens, were heavily laden. They left Albany on Thursday, and as may be supposed, their progress was necessarily very slow. Nights they slept in the open air, after having built fires to keep off the wolves, which thickly infested the forest through which they were journeying. Nothing remarkable happened during the first two day's journey. On Saturday they reached the present site of Knoxville, which appears to be the summit level between Albany and Schoharie, where they halted and assembled together. Some misunderstanding having arisen, a contest ensued, in which many of the party were engaged, from which circumstance the place has since been known by the older inhabitants, as Fegt berg, or fighting hill.

\* This journey of thirty odd miles, is looked upon at the present day as a small matter, since a stage rattles over it every day; but it was far otherwise at that period. Many were the tears of sympathy shed in Albany, at the departure of these good people, *because they were going so far from any other settlement.* What changes time brings. Where is now your sympathy, O ye Albanians! for the comely looking Swiss maidens and their forlorn mothers, who are now in motley groups, lingering not unfrequently a few days with you, ere they commence a western journey, which may number thousands of miles?

What gave rise to this quarrel, I have been unable to learn. It is not improbable that the "green eyed monster" was the direct or indirect cause, originating in a spirit of emulation to direct the movements of the party. No one seems to have been very seriously injured by this unlooked for trial of strength ; the insurgents were overpowered, good order again restored, and the line of march resumed. On Sunday, (probably in the latter part of April,) a day of seven, dedicated to cleansing and decorating the outward man of the civilized world, having arrived at a small brook, which descends from the hills on the north side of Fox's creek, and runs into the latter near the present residence of Samuel Stevens, and within sight of the Schoharie valley, the party halted and resolved on having a general purifying. Says Brown, "*while washing, the lice were swimming down the brook ; which is called Louse kill to this day.*" Tradition corroborates this story. I may have occasion hereafter to speak of the cleanliness of the descendants of these people. There can be little doubt, but that the washing adventure, may prove a mirror to many parties of emigrants, who have been long journeying. It is not difficult to account for the fact, that the most negligent of the number, (for I cannot believe all were so) should have become filthy. They were poor, had not changes of apparel ; of course, the clothing they wore, without much pains-taking to keep it clean, must have become dirty : add to this the fact, that they had been for a great length of time, either journeying or dwelling in rude huts, in either case greatly crowded, without any conveniences for private ablution ; and we have a plausible reason to believe the story a true one. Poor people, although cleanly, find it difficult at times, to exhibit evidences of their neatness, especially while traveling.

The Schoharie flats to which they were journeying, and upon which they arrived on the day of their purifying, had been purchased of the natives by an agent of the Queen, to prevent future hostilities between them and the Germans. The tract of land thus purchased, began on the little Schoharie kill in the town of Middleburgh, at the high water mark of the Schoharie river, at

an oak stump burned hollow, which stump is said to have served the Mohegan and Stockbridge Indians, the purposes of a corn mill; and ran down the river to the north, taking in the flats on both sides of the same, a distance of eight or ten miles, containing twenty thousand acres. By the side of this stump was erected a large pile of stones, which was still standing since the year 1800. Upon this stump was cut the figures of a turtle and a snake, the ensign of the Karighondontee tribe, the Indian seal of the contract. Having arrived in safety, the Germans settled along the Schoharie on the land provided by the queen, in several villages or dorfs, as they called them, under the direction of the seven individuals, who acted at the Camps as their captains or commissaries. Prudence, no doubt, dictated the necessity of settling near together, that they might be the better prepared to anticipate any hostile movement of their Indian neighbors. Weiser's dorf, (so called after Conrad Weiser the founder,) was the most southern village, and occupied part of the present site of the village of Middleburgh. This dorf contained some forty dwellings. They were small, rude huts, built of logs and earth, and covered with bark, grass, &c. They were built on both sides of a street, which ran nearly east and west, and may have been called Weiser street. Hartman's dorf was the next settlement down the river, and was about two miles north of Weiser's dorf. This was the only one of the settlements called after the christian name of its founder or patroon: his name having been Hartman Winteker. This flekken,\* (if the largest village in seven merited the name,) is said to have contained sixty-five dwellings, similar in construction to those spoken of in the dorf above. The Germans, (as is the custom of their descendants,) built their ovens detached from their dwellings: and thirteen are said to have answered all the good house-wives of Hartman's dorf, the purposes of baking. Like the former, this village was built along one street; and I am gratified to think I can inform the reader precisely where it

\* Dorf means a compact farmer's town or small village; flekken a larger village than a dorf and less than a city; and stadt, an incorporated city.—*Brown.*

was situated. Every man who has traveled from Schoharie Court House to Middleburgh will remember, that having proceeded about three miles, and crossed two brooks, the most southern of which was called, in former days, the Wolf's kill, he came to two angles in the road, between which, he perceived his course changed from south to west for the distance of, perhaps, a quarter of a mile. He will also remember, no doubt, how straight and level that part of the road was, gently descending to the west; and, too, that he expressed surprise to his companion, or, if he had no more sensible person with him, to himself, that the road had never been straightened. Now, since I have traced the location of Hartman's dorf by tradition, to the immediate vicinity of this knoll or table-land, upon which the two angles in the road appear, and have too much charity to believe, that that part of the road would not have been straightened, had the commissioners who laid it out not had some noble object in view, I have come to the conclusion, and doubt not the good sense of the reader will bear me out in it, that that part of the road which runs, east and west, between the angles spoken of, was once Hartman's street, and that upon each side of it once stood the unpretending dwellings of Hartman's dorf.

The next village north, was in the vicinity of the court-house, and was called Brunnen or Bruna dorf, which signified the town of springs. There are several springs in this vicinity; and a living one, which issues from beneath the rocks a little distance south-east from the court-house, supplies most of the villagers with excellent water. The principal or most influential man among the first settlers at this place, was John Lawyer. Some of his descendants, as also those of some of the Shaeffers and Ingolds, who were also among the first settlers, still reside near the location of their ancestors. The next settlement was in the vicinity of the present residence of Doctor C. H. Van Dyck, about a mile north of Bruna dorf; and consisted of Johannes George Smidt, (or Smith in English,) with a few followers of the people, for whom he had acted as commissioner at the Camps. Smith is said to have had the best house in Smith's dorf, which



was thatched with straw. I am not certain that any of his clan are now represented in that section. It is probable, however, that the Snyders who reside there, may be descended from the first settlers. Fox's dorf was next to Smith's, north, and took its name from William Fox, its leading man. He settled about a mile from Smith, in the vicinity of Fox's creek, so called after him. The Snyders, Beckers, Zimmers, Balls and Weidmans, now residing along, and near that stream, are regular descendants of the first settlers. Elias Garlock, with a few faithful followers, who, doubtless, adhered to him on account of his great wisdom, which remains to be shown, located about two miles farther down the river, near the present residence of Jacob Vrooman. This was called Garlock's dorf. The Dietzes, Manns and Sternbergs, were among the first settlers at Garlock's dorf, whose descendants still occupy the grounds. The last and most northerly settlement, was called Kneiskern's dorf, after John Peter Kneiskern, its leading man. It was two or three miles from the last mentioned settlement, and was made along the east side of the river, opposite the mouth of Cobel's kill. The Kneiskerns, Stubrachs, Enderses, Sidneys, Berghs and Houcks, residing in that vicinity, are descendants of the original settlers. This, and Bruna dorf, are the only ones of the seven settlements, in which the descendants of the list men or founders, dwell at the present day. The sectional names of Kneiskern's and Hartman's dorf, are still in use; while the other five have sunk into oblivion.

Among the first settlers at these seven dorfs, were some whose descendants still reside in the county, their first location in but few instances being now traceable. It is presumed many of them settled at the two most southern, and important villages. The Keyzers, Boucks, Rickards, Rightmyers, Warners, Weavers, Zimmers, Mattices, Zehs, Bellingers, Borsts, Schoolcrafts, Kryslers, Casselmans, Newkirks, Earharts, Browns, Settles and Merckleys, were doubtless among the first settlers. The whole number of Germans who located in the Schoharie valley in 1711, must have been between five and seven hundred.

CHAPTER II.

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Having located the pioneers of Schoharie according to their several inclinations, let us see how they were to live. More or less land was found at each settlement cleared, and with little pains, it was fitted for cultivation. It has been already shown that their effects were conveyed in such a manner, that we must presume they possessed very little of this world's gear. Their all, no doubt, consisted in a few rude tools, a scanty supply of provisions, a meagre wardrobe, and a small number of rusty fire arms : they had to manufacture their own furniture, if the apology for it, merited such a name. Bedsteads, they for some time dispensed with. From logs they cut blocks, which answered the purposes of chairs and tables ; sideboards, sofas, piano fortes, ottomans, carpets, &c., were to them neither objects of family pride, convenience or envy. They endeavored to foster the friendship of their Indian neighbors, and from them they received corn and beans, which the latter kindly showed them how to cultivate. Within one week after their arrival, four children were born ; a fact I think very worthy of record in the annals of this people. Their names were Catharine Mattice, Elizabeth Lawyer, Wilhelmus Bouck and Johannes Earhart. In preparing ground for planting, which was done in the absence of plows, by broad hoes, they found many ground nuts, which they made use of for food, the first season. I have no account of their having been furnished with provisions by the Queen's agent, after they left Albany, and suppose they were left to live on their own resources, and what the country afforded.

The want of grist mills, for several years, they found to be a source of great inconvenience. The stump mentioned in the pre-

ceding chapter, which served as the southern bound of the first Indian purchase, not only answered the Indians, but the first Germans, the purpose of a corn mill. By the side of this hollow stump, an upright shaft and cross-bar were raised, from which was suspended a heavy wood, or stone pestle, working on the principle of a pump. Their corn for several years, they hulled with lye, or pounded preparatory to eating it.

Brown says, the first wheat was sowed in Schoharie in the fall of 1713, by Lambert Sternberg, of Garlock's dorf. As I have shown the arrival of the Germans to have been two years earlier than the time stated by him, I suppose the first wheat to have been sown in the fall of 1711.

As Schenectada was nearer the Schoharie settlements than Albany, for such necessities as they required the first few years, they visited the former place the most frequently. Those who possessed the means, bought wheat there at two shillings a spint, (a peck,) or six shillings a skipple, had it ground and returned home with it on their backs, by a lonely Indian footh-path, through a heavy forest. It was thus, Sternberg carried the first skipple of wheat ever taken to Schoharie in the berry. He resided near the present residence of Henry Sternberg, a descendant of his. On the west side of the river, opposite Garlock's dorf, had been an Indian castle, which was abandoned about the time the Germans arrived; the occupants having removed up the river, to the Wilder Hook. On the ground within the dilapidated inclosure, the wheat was sowed, or rather planted, (as they then had no plows or horses,) over more than an acre of ground; it was planted within this yard, because it was a warm, rich piece of ground with little grass on it, and being inclosed, would remove the danger of having the crop destroyed in the fall or spring, by deer, which were numerous on the surrounding mountains. This wheat, which rooted remarkably well in the fall, stood so thin, from having been scattered over so much ground, that it was hoed in the spring like a patch of corn; and well was the husbandman rewarded for his labor. Every berry sent forth several stalks, every stalk sustained a drooping head, and

every head teemed with numerous berries. When ripe, it was gathered with the greatest care ; not a single head was lost, and when threshed, the *one* yielded *eighty-three* skipples. In these days, when the weevil scarcely allows three, to say nothing of the eighty, bushels to one ; this statement would perhaps be looked upon as incredible, were not all the circumstances known. Many procured seed from Sternberg, and it was not long before the settlers raised wheat enough for their own consumption.

For several years, they had most of their grain floured at Schenectada. They usually went there in parties of fifteen or twenty at a time, to be better able to defend themselves against wild beasts, which then were numerous between the two places. Often, there were as many women as men in those journeys, and as they had to encamp in the woods at least one night, the women frequently displayed when in danger, as much coolness and bravery as their liege lords. A skipple was the quantity usually borne by each individual, but the stronger often carried more. Not unfrequently, they left Schoharie to go to mill, on the morning of one day, and were at home on the morning of the next ; performing a journey of between forty and fifty miles, in twenty-four hours or less, bearing the ordinary burden ; but at such times, they traveled most of the night without encamping. It is said, that women were not unfrequently among those who performed the journey in the shortest time—preparing a breakfast for their families, from the flour they had brought, on the morning after they left home. Where is the matron now to be found, in the whole valley of the Schoharie, who would perform such a journey, in such a plight ?

As may be supposed, many of the first settlers in Schoharie were related. Hence has arisen that weighty political argument sometimes heard, “he belongs to the cousin family.”

Owing to the industry and economy of the colonists, and the richness of the soil, want soon began to flee their dwellings, and plenty to enter ; and as their clothes began to wax old, they manufactured others from dressed buck-skins, which they obtained from the Indians. A file of those men, clad in buck-skin,

with caps of fox or wolf-skin, all of their own manufacture, must have presented a formidable appearance. It is not certain but the domestic economy of the male, was carried into the female department; and that here and there a ruddy maiden, concealed her charming proportions beneath a habit of deer-skin.

It is said that physicians accompanied the first Germans to Schoharie; and that for many years, ministers, or missionaries, under pay from the British government, labored in the different German settlements in the country. They visited the people; married those whose peace of mind Cupid had destroyed; preached to, and exhorted all. Their audiences usually occupied some convenient barn in the summer season, and the larger dwellings in the winter.

The want of horses and cattle at first, was much felt by the settlements. By whom cattle, swine and sheep were first introduced, I have been unable to learn. The first of the horse kind they possessed, was an old gray mare. She was purchased at Schenectada for a small sum, by *nine* individuals of Weiser's dorf; and it is said they kept her moving. Who the nine were, who gloried in owning this old *Rosinante*, is unknown; but there can be little doubt that Weiser, the patroon, owned an important share. It may be asked, whether the people of those settlements, who resided too close together, to admit of lands for cultivation lying between them, did not live as do the shakers; who make all their earnings common stock. With a mutual understanding, each labored for his own benefit, and in order to prevent difficulty, lands were marked out and bounds placed, so that every one knew and cultivated his own parcel.

Not long after the Germans settled in Schoharie, the Dutch began a settlement in Vrooman's Land, on the west side of the river, two or three miles above Weiser's dorf. Adam Vrooman, a citizen of Schenectada—a farmer of considerable wealth, and somewhat advanced in life, took a royal patent for this land, from which circumstance, it was called Vrooman's Land: by which name it is still distinguished. This patent was executed August 26, 1714. Previous to obtaining the royal title, Vrooman had received Indian



conveyances for portions of the land as *gifts*. One of two deeds, which have escaped the fate of most of Col. Peter Vrooman's papers, contains the names of eighteen Indians, inserted in the following order: "Pennonequieeson, Canquothoo, Hendrick the Indian, [probably King Hendrick of the French war,] Kawnawahdeakeoe, Turthyowriss, Sagonadietah, Tucktahaessoo, Onnahsea, Kahenterunkqua, Amos the Indian, Jacob the Indian, Cornelius the Indian, Gonhe Wannah, Oneedyea, Leweas the Indian, Johanis the Indian, Tuquaw-in-hunt, and Esras the Indian, all owners and proprietors of a certain piece of land, situate, lying and being in the bounds of the land called Skohere." The title is for two hundred and sixty acres of land near the hill "called Onitstagrawa;" two hundred of which were flats, and sixty acres wood-land. The instrument closed as follows: "*In testimony whereof, we, the three races or tribes of the Maquase, the Turtle, Wolf and Bear, being present, have hereunto set our marks and seals, in the town of Schenectady, this two and twentieth day of August, and in the tenth year of her Majesty's* [Queen Anne's] *reign. Annoque Domini, 1711.*" Eighteen wax seals are attached to the conveyance, in front of which are arranged, in the order named, the devices of a *turtle*, a *wolf* and a *bear*, the former holding a tomahawk in one of its claws.

The other deed alluded to, is dated April 30, 1714, and contains the eight following names: "Sinonnecquerison, Tanuryso, Nisawgoreeatah, Turgourus, Honodaw, Kannakquawes, Tigreedontee, Onnodeegondee, all of the Maquaes country, native Indians, owners and proprietors, &c." The deed was given for three hundred and forty acres of woodland, lying eastward of the sixty acres previously conveyed, "bounded northward by the Onitstagrawa, to the southward by a hill called Kan-je-a-ra-go-re, to the westward by a ridge of hills that join to Onitstagrawa, extending southerly much like unto a half moon, till it joins the aforesaid hill Kanjeearagore." This instrument closes in the manner of the one before noticed, except that each Indian's name is placed before a seal to which he had made his mark. The ensigns of the three Mohawk tribes, are conspicuously traced in the midst of the

signatures. One of the two witnesses to both deeds was Leo Stevens, a woman who acted as interpreter on the occasion of granting each conveyance. Both deeds were duly recorded in the secretary's office of the province.


March 30th, 1726, Adam Vrooman obtained a new Indian title to the flats known as Vrooman's Land, executed by nine individuals of the nation, "in behalf of all the Mohaugs Indians." Some difficulty had probably arisen, in consequence of his holding more land than the first deeds specified. The new title gave the land previously conveyed with the sentence, "let there be as much as there will, more or less, for we are no surveyors;" and was executed with the ensigns of the Mohawk nation—the *turtle*, *wolf* and *bear*.

Vrooman's patent was bounded on the north by a point of the Onitstagrawa and the Line kill, and on the south by the white pine swamp, (as a little swamp near the present residence of Samuel Lawyer was then called) and a brook running from it, and embraced a good part of the flats between those two bounds from the hill to the river, excepting the Wilder Hook: where dwelt many of the natives, and where, as before stated, was their strongest castle. This patent was given for eleven hundred acres, more or less. It is said to have contained about fourteen hundred acres: than which very little better land ever was tilled. He had not designed to settle on this land himself, but made the purchase for a son. Peter Vrooman, for whom it was bought, settled on it soon after the purchase. He had quite a family, his oldest son, Bartholomew, being at that time fourteen or fifteen years old. He had a house erected previous to his moving there, and other conveniences for living. The first summer, he employed several hands, planted considerable corn, and fenced in some of his land. In the following autumn, he returned with his wife and children to Schenectada to spend the winter; leaving a hired man by the name of Truax, and two blacks, Morter, and Mary his wife, to take care of the property; of which he left considerable. Not long after Vrooman returned to Schenectada, Truax was most cruelly murdered. The circumstances attending this murder, are

substantially as follows. The evening before his death, Truax returned from the pleasing recreation of gunning, with a mess of pigeons, which he told Mary to dress and prepare for breakfast. Being fatigued, he retired to rest earlier than usual, and soon forgot his cares and dangers, in a grateful slumber familiar to the sportsman. Mary cleansed the pigeons, and after having done so, she unconsciously put the knife into a side pocket still bloody, intending, but forgetting to wash it. Morter was absent from home during that evening and most of the night. Mary arose betimes in the morning, with no small pains prepared the savory dish, and waited sometime for Truax to rise. Observing that he kept his room unusually late, she went to his door and called to him, but received no answer. She tried to open the door and found it locked on the inside. As may be supposed, she felt the most lively apprehensions that all was not right. She could, from some position outside the house, look into his window. Thither she with trepidation went, when her suspicions were more than realized, and she learned too well the reason he had not risen at his usual hour. She quickly communicated intelligence of her discovery to the Indians, her nearest neighbors: who, on their arrival at the house, burst open the door of his room. Horrible indeed was the sight then disclosed. Poor Truax lay in his bed, which he had sought without the least suspicion of danger, cold and stiff in his own gore; with his throat cut from ear to ear. Indian messengers were immediately dispatched to Schenectada, to communicate the tragic affair to Peter Vrooman. About the same time, the bloody knife was discovered in the pocket of the weeping Mary. On the evening of the same, or early the following day, the messengers returned with Vrooman, and proper officers to arrest the murderer, or whoever might be suspected. Suspicions were fixed upon the two blacks; and when the fact of finding the bloody knife in the pocket of Mary, and the circumstance of Morter's being absent from home were known, both were arrested, and hurried off to Albany for trial.

The day of examination soon arrived, and the prisoners were

brought to the bar. The trial proceeded, and the testimony of the Indians, to whom Mary had first communicated her suspicions of the murder, was heard. No unsettled difficulty was shown to have existed between the murdered and the accused : indeed, little appeared at the trial to criminate the blacks, more than is already known to the reader. When the facts, that the throat of Truax had been cut, that a bloody knife was found on the person of Mary, and that Morter had sullenly refused to answer questions during his arrest and confinement, were known to the court, circumstantial evidence was deemed sufficiently strong and lucid to fix guilt upon them : and as the murder had been an aggravated one, the prisoners were sentenced, as tradition says, to be burned alive. When interrogated by the Judge, before passing his sentence, whether they had aught to say why sentence of death should not pass upon them, Mary boldly and firmly declared her innocence, and her ignorance of the real murderer : stating, in a feeling manner, all she knew of the affair ; how the knife had been heedlessly put into her pocket after cleansing the pigeons, and forgotten ; how much she respected the deceased, and how much she lamented his untimely death ; and ended by an appeal to the great Judge of the universe of her innocence of the crime, for which she stood accused. Morter, on being interrogated, remained sullenly silent ; and after receiving the sentence, both were remanded to prison. On the day of their execution, which had not been long delayed, the condemned were taken west of the city a little distance, where had been previously prepared, a circular pile of pine faggots of a conical form. In the centre of the pile the victims were placed, and the fatal torch applied. Mary, still protesting her innocence, called on the Lord, whom she trusted would save her ; and prayed that he would, in the heavens, show to the spectators some token of her innocence. But alas ! the day of miracles had passed ; and as the flame surrounded her, she gave herself up to despair. She expired, endeavoring to convince the multitude of her innocence. Her companion met his fate, with the same stoic indifference he had manifested from the hour of his arrest.



After the execution of this unhappy couple, one of whom, as will be seen hereafter, expired innocent of the crime for which she suffered, the affair died away, and nothing further was disclosed for several years. Facts then came to light revealing the whole transaction. At the time the murder was committed, a man by the name of Moore resided at Weiser's dorf. The Germans at that settlement, which was distant from the dwelling of Vrooman about two miles, it was supposed, envied Vrooman the possession of the fine tract of land he had secured; and by compelling him to abandon, hoped to possess it. It is not probable, however, that any one of them, except Moore, thought of getting it by the crime of murder. He conceived such a plan, and conspired with Morter to carry it into execution. Moore thought if Truax was murdered, Vrooman would be afraid to return for fear of sharing a like fate, and would then dispose of the land on reasonable terms; when he might secure to himself a choice parcel. Morter was promised, as a reward for participating in the crime, the hand of Moore's sister in marriage. It is not likely the girl herself, had the most distant idea of the *happiness* her brother had in store for her. Amalgamation to Morter appeared in enticing garments. To pillow his head on a white bosom, and bask in amalgamated pleasure, would, he thought, amply compensate for becoming the tool of Moore. He therefore resolved to aid him, and it was agreed the deed should be executed in such a manner as to throw suspicion on Mary his wife: who, he intended, should prove no obstacle in the way of realizing his sensual desires. The circumstance of his wife's having pigeons to dress, seemed to favor the design. Perhaps he had seen her put the bloody knife into her pocket: at all events, the present seemed to them a favorable opportunity, and they resolved to accomplish the foul deed that night. Accordingly, at midnight, the murderers approached the house in which slumbered their innocent victim. Finding his door locked, they found it necessary to devise some plan to gain admission to his room without breaking the lock, and, if possible, without alarming Mary, a victim they intended the law should claim. By some means they gained the



top of the chimney, which was not very difficult, as the dwelling was but one story, and sliding carefully down that, they soon found themselves in the presence of their still slumbering victim. Which of the two drew the fatal knife is unknown ; it is supposed one held him, while the other, at a single stroke, severed the jugular vein. The nefarious deed accomplished, the assassins left the room, and away they sped from the dwelling, fearful alike of their own shadows.

The light of the morrow's sun disclosed this damnable deed. When the commotion and anxiety of the next day followed discovery, Moore feigned business from home, and kept out of the way until after the arrest of his hardened accomplice. Not long after this murder was committed, a disturbance arose among the Germans, through ignorance, as will be seen, and many of them left the Schoharie valley and sought a residence elsewhere. Moore was among those who went to Pennsylvania. He lived a life of fear for some years in that state, but at length a summons from on high laid him upon a bed of languishing. As disease preyed upon his vitals, the worm of torment gnawed his conscience. Sometimes in his broken slumbers, he was visited (in fancy,) by the ghost of a man struggling upon a bed ; and as he heard the rattle of his throat as the breath left his body, he saw the fearful gash and the flowing blood. At other times he saw two persons, whom the crackling flames were devouring ; and, as the appeal to heaven for a token of the innocence of one of them rang in his ears, he often awoke with exclamations of horror. Being past the hope of recovery, and so grievously tormented, in order to relieve in some measure his guilty conscience, he disclosed the facts above related. Truax was the first white man murdered in Schoharie county ; and may be said to have fallen a victim to the unholy cause of *amalgamation*.

The Germans had not been long in possession of the Schoharie flats, and were just beginning to live comfortably, when Nicholas Bayard, an agent from the British crown, appeared in their midst. He put up in Smith's dorf, at the house of Han-Yerry (John George) Smith, already noted as being the best domicil in the

settlement. From this house, (which was in fact the first hotel in Schoharie, and might have been called the half-way house, as Smith's was the central of the seven dorfs,) Bayard issued a notice, that to every house-holder, who would make known to him the boundaries of the land he had taken; he would give a deed in the name of his sovereign. The Germans, ignorant though honest, mistook altogether the object of the generous offer, and supposing it designed to bring them again under tyrannic landholders, and within the pale of royal oppression, resolved at once to kill Bayard, whom they looked upon as a foe to their future peace; and by so doing, establish more firmly the independence they had for several years enjoyed. Consequently, early the next morning, the nature of the resolve having been made known the evening before, the honest burghers of Schoharie, armed with guns and pitch-forks; with many of the softer sex, in whom dwelt the love of liberty, armed with broad hoes, clubs and other missiles; surrounded the hotel of Smith, and demanded the person of Bayard, dead or alive. Mine host, who knew at that early day that a well managed hotel was the traveler's home, positively refused to surrender to his enraged countrymen, his guest. The house was besieged throughout the day. Sixty balls were fired by the assailants through the roof, which was the most vulnerable part, as that was straw: and as Bayard had, previous to his arrival, been by accident despoiled of an eye, he ran no little risk of returning to the bosom of his family, if fortunate enough to return, totally blind. Bayard was armed with pistols, and occasionally returned the fire of his assailants, more, no doubt, with the design of frightening, than of killing them. Having spent the last round of their ammunition, hunger beginning to gnaw, and the sable shades of evening to conceal the surrounding hills, the siege was raised, and the heroes of the bloodless day dispersed to their homes, to eat their fill and dream on their personal exploits—the invulnerability of their foe, and the mutability of princely promises. The coast again clear, Bayard left Schoharie, and under the cover of night, traveled to Schenectada. From there he sent a message to Schoharie, offering to give, to such as

should appear there with a single ear of corn—acknowledge him the regal agent—and name the bounds of it, a free deed and lasting title to their lands. No one felt inclined to call on the agent, whose life they had attempted to take, and after waiting some time, he went to Albany and disposed of the lands they occupied, to five individuals. The patent was granted to Myndert Schuyler, Peter Van Brugh, Robert Livingston, jr., John Schuyler and Henry Wileman, the purchasers, and was executed at Fort George, in New York, on the third day of November, 1714, in the first year of the reign of George I., by Robert Hunter, then Governor of the province, in behalf of the King. The date of this conveyance, I think, goes far to prove the settlement of Schoharie to have been as early as the time previously given; as the settlers had been upon their lands several years, and were beginning to live comfortably, previous to the arrival of the royal agent.

This patent began at the northern limits of the Vrooman patent, on the west side of the river, and the little Schoharie kill on the opposite side, and ran from thence north; taking in a strip on both sides of the river: at times mounting the hills, and at others leaving a piece of flats, until it nearly reached the present Montgomery county line. It curved some, and the intention was, to embrace all the flats in that distance. Patent was taken for ten thousand acres. Lewis Morris, jr., and Andrus Coeman, who were employed by the purchasers to survey and divide the land; finding the flats along Fox's creek, and a large piece at Kneiskern's dorf, near the mouth of Cobel's kill, were not included in that patent; lost no time in securing them. Those several patents often ran into each other, and in some instances were so far apart, as to leave a gore between them. The patent taken to secure the remainder of the flats at Kneiskern's dorf, began at a spring on the west side of the river, near the bridge which now crosses that stream above Schoharie Court House, and also ran to, or near the Montgomery county line. Between that and the first patent secured, which were intended to embrace all the flats, was left a very valuable gore, which Augustus Van Cortlandt afterwards secured. Finding much difficulty in dividing their land,

they so often intersected, the first five purchasers and their surveyors, Morris and Coeman, whose right in the Schoharie soil was proportionably valuable, agreed to make joint stock of the three patents. Since that time they have been distinguished as the lands of the *seven partners*. Patents and deeds granted at subsequent dates, for lands adjoining those of the seven partners, were, in some instances, bounded in such a manner as to infringe on those of the latter, or leave gores between them. As may be supposed, evils were thus originated, which proved a source of bickering and litigation for many years. Suits for partition, were brought successively in Schoharie county in 1819—25—26—28 and 29: at which time they were finally adjusted. The latest difficulties are said to have existed between the people of Duanesburg and Schoharie.

After the seven partners secured their title to the Schoharie flats, they called on the Germans who dwelt upon them, either to take leases of, to purchase, or to quit them altogether. To neither of these terms would they accede, declaring that Queen Anne had given them the lands, and they desired no better title. The reader will bear in mind the fact, that those people had no lawyers among them, except by name, on their arrival—that they lived in a measure isolated from those who could instruct them—that they spoke a language different from that in which the laws of the country were written, which laws they were strangers to; and that they placed implicit confidence in the promises of the *good Queen*, that they should have the lands free; and he will be less surprised at their stubbornness. Their faith in the promises of the Queen, had not been misplaced, as the intention of the crown to give them free titles by Bayard clearly proves. The great difficulty proceeded from their ignorance of the utility, and manner of granting deeds. The patent taken by the five partners was dated in November, 1714; and it was not until the first of August of that year, that Queen Anne died. It is therefore very probable, Bayard was an agent commissioned by her; if not, by George I., who intended in good faith to carry into effect the design of his predecessor. Whether royal agents were sent to the other Ger-

man settlements in the United States for the same charitable purpose or not, I am unable to say.

At this period of the history, several incidents transpired worthy of notice. I have already remarked that the Germans were fond of athletic exercises. After their location, such sports as were calculated to try their speed and strength, were not unfrequently indulged in.

In the summer of 1713 or '14, a *stump* was given by the Indians to their German neighbors at Weiser's dorf, to run a foot race, offering to stake on the issue, a lot of dressed deer-skins against some article the Germans possessed; possibly, their old mare. The challenge was accepted, and a son of Conrad Weiser was selected, to run against a little dark Indian, called the most agile on foot of all the tribe. On a beautiful day the parties assembled at Weiser's dorf to witness the race. The race-course was above the village, and on either side the Germans and Indians took stations to encourage their favorites. About individual bets on the occasion, I have nothing to say. The couple started, a distance of half a mile or more from the goal, at a given signal, and onward they dashed with the fleetness of antelopes, amid the shouts and huzzas of the spectators. The race was to terminate just beyond the most southern dwelling of Weiser's dorf. They ran with nearly equal speed until their arrival at the dwelling mentioned, sometimes fortune inclining to the white, and sometimes to the red skin; when an unexpected event decided the contest in favor of the German. They had to run very close to the house, and Weiser, being on the outside as they approached it side by side, sprang with all his might against his competitor. The sudden impetus forced the Indian against the building, and he rebounded and fell half dead upon the ground. Weiser then easily won the race, amid the loud, triumphant shouts of his countrymen. Whether the victor found his strength failing him, and adopted the expedient of disabling the Indian from fear of losing the wager, or whether, confident of superior pedestrian powers, he gave the Indian a jog with malicious intent, is unknown to the writer. The Indians, and their defeated champion, were terribly



enraged at first, and positively refused to give up the forfeit : but Weiser, who had already learned much of the Indian character, and knew the danger of trifling with their misfortunes, with a grave-yard countenance, appeased their wrath, by satisfying them that the whole difficulty proceeded from accident—that he stumbled upon some obstacle which rendered it unavoidable, and was *very* sorry it had happened. With this explanation their anger was appeased, and they delivered up the skins ; from which it is but fair to conclude, the whole Weiser family were clothed. This is the only dishonest trick I have heard related of the first Germans, and with the exception of Moore, they seem to have been strangers to crime. Foot races were often run by those people : at times, fifteen or twenty entering the course together.

It has been already remarked, that the Germans settled in clusters or dorfs, to be the better able to repel Indian invasion, and it now remains to be shown that such caution was rewarded, if *tradition* speaks the truth. The privilege the writer claims, he allows to the reader, to wit : that of believing as much of the following story as he pleases. When related to him, the author thought it too good to be lost.

At the foot of the hill south of where stood Hartman's dorf, which is the descent from a table land to the river flats, as the road now lies, may be observed on one side a kind of marsh, through which runs a brook, receiving in its course the waters of several springs. At the period to which I allude, this marsh was thickly covered with alders and other swamp timber, and afforded a safe covert for no inconsiderable force. Early upon a certain day, in a certain year, Karighondontee and many of his warriors were assembled at this swamp, to give battle to the good people of Hartman's dorf, distant half a mile from the encampment. If the reader desired to know the cause of difficulty, or in what precise year it arose, I should be unable to inform him ; it must have been previous to the arrival of Bayard. It being rumored through the place that it was besieged, great was the commotion through its one important street. By times, the brave Captain Hartman had taken a public station, and around him a mul-

titude were soon gathered. The tactic skill of the Captain required little time in marshaling his brave followers—his tender care about their temporal affairs at the Camps being still remembered—who waited with impatience the march to *glory*. What other officers assisted Captain Hartman on this momentous occasion, is of no consequence at this late period. Various were the weapons with which the dangerous looking corps were armed. Few fire-arms might have been seen, but forks, shovels, broad hoes, axes, poles, clubs, hand-saws, and the Lord knows what other missiles, gleamed threateningly in the sun. Indeed, the care-worn and trusty sword of the Captain, when drawn, added not a little to the warlike appearance of the troop, to say nothing of its multiform, military garb. “What a fine martial array,” thought he, as his eye ran along the ranks, and he gave the command to “face towards the river and march!” Each individual of the brave band cast a furtive, speaking glance at the front stoop of his own dwelling, where stood the domestic circle weeping or encouraging, or that of his lover, who was leaning upon the half opened door, with an arm across her face to conceal the gushing tear, or her pouting, nectareal lip; and to the enlivening sound of the violin, their favorite and only music, set forward with a firm step, determined to conquer or die. Two-thirds of the distance from the village to the rendezvous of the enemy already in his rear, the Captain ordered a halt, to communicate to his troops some necessary instructions about the plan and manner of prosecuting the attack. Some of his men now hesitated about assaulting the enemy, as they were mostly armed with unerring rifles. The misgivings on this score soon became general, and then was called forth all the *dormant* eloquence their brave leader was so noted for possessing. Stepping upon a stump, from which position his commanding person and cheerful countenance were truly conspicuous, he addressed his followers. He directed their attention to the time when they were persecuted in Germany—to the perils they had overcome by sea and land. He assured them that although the enemy had rifles, yet *not one of them should discharge*. He conjured them not to sully, by cow-

ardice, their national character. He reminded them of their social relations which were jeopardized—of the love of their wives, their parents, their children, and lastly of their plighted. He accompanied the latter part of his pathetic speech, with a significant flourish of his sword towards their village, a part of which was still in view. The appeal was *irresistable*, and with one voice the whole corps, in true German, responded—"Fuehret an!" Lead on! Fearlessly he did lead on, and thus was he followed. Faith is the vital principle by which every successful effort of man is put forth, and without it, the sinews of war are powerless. Indeed, faith is no less requisite in war than religion, and no battle ever was won without it. So thought the daring Hartman, and so had he instructed his followers to think. When they came to the wood in which the enemy had taken a position, the Germans, following the example of their Captain, rushed furiously upon the wary foe. They met, as had been anticipated, his leveled guns, but no sound, save their repeated clicks, was heard: no death-telling report rang through the valley, and the whoops of the savages, as they noted the failure of their rifles, gradually died away on the morning air. The confidence of the colonists was increased, on beholding the prophecy of their Captain verified, in the click of non-discharging fire-arms, and true to their leader, they seconded all his movements. The red man fell back abashed, and ere he could discover the cause of his ill luck, the sturdy German was upon him, the sight of whose weapon was enough to carry terror to his heart's warmest blood, and he was compelled again to flee. "An!" shouted the immortal Captain, "An!" The charge was too impetuous to be withstood, and the Indians fled in terror, uttering, as they left the swamp in possession of their enemy, the death yell. Well might they have supposed, from the clashing of missiles coming accidentally in contact with their fellows, or with obtruding trees, and now and then with the head or shoulders of their comrades, that the carnage was terrible, and the reason for the death yell obviously augmented. What a cruel, bloody art, is war. The troops of Captain Hartman belabored the natives lustily with fork and hoe, as may

be supposed, in their retreat. Here, some were seen hobbling off from the field of battle with bruised shins ; there, others with elbows or fingers disjoined—all amazed at the manifest prowess of their German enemies, and still more dismayed that their rifles gave no report. If any there were among them who fought on that memorable occasion with bows and arrows, and doubtless there were some, it is highly probable the thick buck-skin garments of the colonists arrested the further progress of their arrows ; else the fate of the day might still have been different, and I now had to record the *success*, instead of the *defeat*, of the stout Canadian Chief, Karighondontee. The little army of Hartman were soon left complete masters of the bloodless field, (as it would have been, had not the careless wielding of the missiles brought them occasionally in contact with a nasal organ ;) and the repeated German huzzas of the conquerors, reverberated along the *Oucongana*.

The enemy fairly ousted and the field gloriously won, the victors returned again to their homes to a still more enlivening air than the one with which they had left them, the whole length of the bow being given it ; where awaited them the cheers and smiles of their fair ones. It is but reasonable to suppose, that a messenger had been sent forward to apprise the villagers of the great success and triumph of the German arms, without loss of life or limb, since I must believe, that had the good matrons been expecting to see any of the corps borne home on a litter, they would not have made the welkin ring with their shouts. Thus ended the first regular battle of the Germans in the valley of Schoharie, no less gloriously than did the siege of Smith's hotel, already before the reader, on which occasion they compelled their supposed enemy to flee by night. One thing, however, remained to be done, the pipe of peace was yet to be smoked. Accordingly, on an appointed day, soon after the battle, the parties met in the shade of a majestic oak, not a mile from the battle field, which had buffeted the storms of several centuries, and may be still standing, and well and faithfully did the Germans smoke the calumet. They are a people extremely fond

of fumigating, and the opportunity to show their Indian neighbors their patience and skill in the art, as may be supposed, was heartily embraced. Nor is it improbable, that their countrymen at Weiser's dorf were guests on so important an occasion. The Indians were again compelled to accord to their (now) friends of the pipe, superior skill. The Virginia weed all burned, the parties dispersed. Well would it be if all battles ended, like the battle of Hartman's dorf, in nothing worse than *smoke*.

Perhaps thou art amazed, kind reader, while perusing the simple narrative of this battle, to find that the fire-arms of the Indians did not discharge. The days of witchcraft are now happily passed forever; but the time has been, when it was no uncommon thing for *a spell or enchantment to extend to the lock of a rifle*: so says tradition.—George Warner.

We have seen how Bayard, the royal agent, was treated, when he visited Schoharie to execute deeds to the German land-holders; that in consequence, the land was disposed of, and it now remains to be shown what effect that sale had on the tenant. Being called upon by the partners to lease or purchase, they declared they would do neither. Finding lenient measures of no avail, they resolved to obtain justice by the strong arm of the law. Accordingly, a sheriff from Albany, by the name of Adams, was sent to apprehend some of the boldest of the trespassers, as they had now become, and frighten others into proper terms. The Albanians greatly underrated the character and bravery of those people, who had not only compelled an agent of the crown to flee, but had, in fair fight, victoriously battled their Indian neighbors. It is *possible* they had never heard of that terrible conflict. Adams, conscious of his own honorable intentions, passing through a part of the valley, made a halt at Weiser's dorf. He had no sooner discovered his business and attempted the arrest of an individual, than a mob was collected, and at that early day the *lynch law* was enforced. The women of that generation, as has been shown by their journeys to Schenectada, possessed Amazonian strength and constitutions, if not proportions; nor, indeed, were they lacking in Spartan bravery. A part of those well-meaning dames,



remembering the promises of Queen Anne, and sharing with their husbands the belief that they were objects of oppression,—that the intention was to compel them to pay for lands they already considered their own; under the direction of Magdalene Zeh, a self appointed captain, took the sheriff into their own hands and dealt with him according to his deserts, of which the captain was judge. He was knocked down by a blow from the magistrate, and inducted into various places in that young village where the sow delighted to wallow. After receiving many indignities in the neighborhood of Weiser's dorf, some of which he was conscious of receiving and some not, he was placed upon a rail, and rode skimmington through most of the settlements. He was exhibited at Hartman's, Bruna, Smith's and Fox's dorfs to his discomfiture; and finally deposited on a small bridge, made of logs, that had been placed across a stream on the old Albany road, a distance from the starting point of between six and seven miles; no ordinary journey for such a conveyance. This stream was formerly called Mill brook,—why, remains to be seen,—and crosses the road a short distance west of the residence of Peter Mann, in Fox's creek valley. The captain then seized a stake, which she carelessly laid over his person, until two of his ribs made four, and his organs of vision were diminished one half. She then, with little ceremony and less modesty, bathed his temples in a very unusual, though simple manner, to the great annoyance of the uninjured eye—poor fellow, he could not resist the kindness—and called off her compatriots, leaving him for dead; or rather to die if he chose. He saw fit to do no such act, in such a plight, and after such a *nursing*; and as soon as consciousness returned, how long after Mistress Lynch had left him is unknown, he gathered himself together and departed for Albany. What strange thoughts must have occupied his mind, while *homeward bound*. He must have been conscious, when the faculties of his mind renewed their action, that whether his knowledge had increased or not, his *bumps* assuredly had. His progress must necessarily have been very slow, thus bruised and maimed, and it was not until the third day after he had been on the rail-*rode*, that he reached Ver-

re-berg, a hill seven miles west of Albany, from whence he was taken to the city in a wagon. As there were no public houses, and few Samaritans on the road at that time, he was exposed nights to the carnival of wild beasts, and by day, to danger of perishing with hunger. His arrival at Albany, wounded and *half* blind as he was, and *maul-treated* as he had been, prognosticated no good for the people of Schoharie. The leading facts in the foregoing statement, were published by Judge Brown, who assured the author that he received them from Sheriff Adams, *viva-voce*—from his own lips.

The word berg, as we have shown, signifies a hill or mountain. At the period of which I write, before public houses were established between the two places, the people of Schoharie, who had occasion to go to Albany to make disposals and purchases, went in squads and encamped out over night. The most important bergs and creeks on the road, were then the guides by which they knew the route, distance, &c., and served the traveler in lieu of mile-stones. The first important stopping place, after leaving Schoharie, was at the Long-berg, east of Gallupville. There, if the wayfarer left the valley late, he tarried over night: to it was therefore called the first day's journey. The Beaverkill, which is a branch of Fox's creek, was also a guide: then came the Feght-berg, Supawn-berg, Lice-berg, Helle-berg, Botte-Mentis-berg, and lastly Verre-berg. All these names had some significant meaning, which continued to remind the traveler of their origin, long after the road, which was then little more than a rough foot path, and hardly admissible for any kind of wagons, became a public one, properly laid out. Long-berg signified the long hill. Feght-berg, the fighting hill, the origin of which has previously been given. Supaan is the name among the Germans and Dutch, by which Indian pudding, usually called mush or hasty pudding among the English, is known. Why that name attaches to a hill, the writer has not been informed. The origin of Lice-berg and Verre-berg are also among the mysteries. A hill was called Botte-Mentis-berg from the following circumstance. A man, whose given name was Botte Mace,—or Bartholomew in English—was

passing along in the evening and fell into a pit, where he was obliged to remain until morning : to the nearest hill was given his name, by which it was long after known.

As may be supposed, the people of Schoharie, after dealing with poor Adams in the manner they had, became cautious about visiting Albany, where several of the partners resided. There was, in fact, little intercourse between Schoharie and Albany for some time : the people of the former viewing those of the latter place, in a light of lively apprehension. In civilized life, it is happily ordered that one community shall not live entirely independent of all others. There were some necessities which they must have, and which they could not well procure without going there. The men, therefore, sent their wives after salt ; which was one of the indispensables ; saying, in effect, *they will reverence them* : and if they did venture to Albany themselves, they were sure to do so on the Sabbath, and equally mindful of leaving the same evening. What a profanation of the Lord's day !—but let us not anticipate a judgment. By remaining silent in the mean time, and not appearing to heed their coming or going, the real owners of the Schoharie soil, lured the occupants into a belief, that all the malicious acts extended to Sheriff Adams, not forgetting the last act of *Magdalene*, were entirely forgotten : and that there was no longer any need of caution about entering that good city. It was indeed presuming much on the charity of the partners, whose agent had been so harshly treated : but no matter, such was the fact. With the vigilance of the sentinel crow, were the people of Schoharie watched, who began to be looked upon as being no better than they should be,—as women are wont to say of frail sisters,—and preparations were matured for seizing some of them. It was not long after suspicion was lulled, before quite a number of them entered the city for salt, when the partners, with Sheriff Adams and posse, arrested and committed them to jail. The most notorious of the party were placed in the dungeon, among whom was Conrad Weiser, jr., of running memory. As soon as news of this arrest and imprisonment reached Schoharie, her citizens were horror stricken ?

“*What shall we do?*”—was the interrogatory on the lips of one and all. How sadly, thought they, have we realized our European dreams of American happiness. Desirous of remedying in future the evils to which they were subjected, it was, at a meeting of the citizens, resolved to get up a petition setting forth their grievances, persecutions, &c.; and delegate three of their number to lay it, with all due humility, at the feet of King George; praying, at the time, for his future protection against their enemies, the Albanians. This petition, which is said to have been drawn by John Newkirk, was entrusted to the elder Conrad Weiser, one Cassleman, and a third person, name not known, for presentation.

Looking through grates and living on bread and water, had a wonderful effect on the spirits and temper of the incarcerated citizens of Schoharie. They therefore made a virtue of necessity, and resolved to comply with the requisitions of the law, by taking leases and agreeing to pay rent for, or to purchase the land. Before releasing the prisoners, the partners drew up a statement of the abuses to Bayard and Adams, when in the discharge of their official duties at Schoharie, and required them to be witnessed under hand and seal. This last requisition complied with, they were allowed to depart for their own homes.

The importance with which the colonists viewed this matter may be conceived by the delegation to England: for, surely, no trifling consideration would induce three men, who loved retirement, to make such a journey at such a time. We should look upon it at the present day, as being a great undertaking—saying nothing of locomotives, rail-roads and steam-packets, which were then unknown. No delay was allowed after procuring the duly attested evidence of the proceedings of Judge Lynch: it was forwarded immediately to the King. It is highly probable, that the same ship bore the Schoharie ambassadors and the swift witness against them, to the British throne. The petition was presented about the year 1714 or '15. The ship in due time arrived in England, and the Schoharie delegation, wishing to make a respectable appearance among the *foreign ambassadors*, were subjected to

some little delay, in arranging their wardrobe, exchanging their buck-skin garments for cloth, &c.: in the mean time, the message of the partners was under the consideration of the King. On presenting their petition, how were Weiser and his friends astounded, to find the King and his ministry in possession of all the late transactions at Schoharie. Had the ghosts of Bayard and Adams appeared before them, they would hardly have been more horror-stricken, than they were to hear their own misdemeanors told them from such a source. Their confusion betrayed their guilt, and established, beyond a doubt, the truth of the charges preferred against them and their neighbors. The King and his advisers, supposing the evil deeds of the Schoharie people resulted from *bad hearts* instead of ignorance, the real parent of all their difficulties, without listening to what they might say for themselves, ordered them to close confinement in the tower.

How much the present difficulty of these well meaning people argues in favor of an *education*, and a knowledge of the world and its transactions. Had they been better informed, they would have been less suspicious ; for suspicion and distrust are the handmaids of ignorance. The *liberal minded*, is generally the *well informed* man. But, as already remarked, there were some good reasons for their not advancing rapidly in their knowledge of men and things. They spoke not the general language of the country : which circumstance prevented, in a measure, that intercourse with the world, so necessary to the expansion of the human understanding, and the removal of national or local prejudices. They were accustomed to transact most of their own business without pen, ink or paper ; and, agreeable to the knowledge they had, and their own method of doing business, they considered a promise made in good faith, as valid as a bond, for such in fact it was with them, and never dreamed of the possibility of their being mistaken about the object of Bayard's mission ; or that any thing farther was necessary from the British crown to establish their legal title to the lands, than the mere promise of the Queen that they should, without money or price, possess them.

During the confinement of the disappointed trio, many of the



people of Schoharie, convinced that they stood in their own light, and that they had wholly mistaken the intention of Bayard, too late indeed to obtain a legal title to their lands free of charge, began to purchase of the partners, who granted them liberal terms. At length, Weiser and his comrades were discharged from the tower, and proceeded home with all possible haste : and had the former only been by name in the positive degree on his arrival in England, he assuredly would have been by nature in the comparative on his return to Schoharie ; as he had become in fact much *wiser*. The return of the embassy, whose mission had resulted in effecting nothing but disgrace for themselves ; and tended only to disclose the general ignorance of their constituents, created no little excitement in the valley. Conrad Weiser was, by nature, a proud, high-spirited man, and could not brook the mortification his own ignorance had originated. Soon after his return, he resolved to leave Schoharie forever, and had little difficulty in persuading many of his countrymen to join him. Accordingly, with as little delay as possible, about sixty families packed up and set forward with all they possessed for Pennsylvania. The want of horses and cows, which was so seriously felt by the Germans when they first located at Schoharie, was, at the time I now speak of, a source of little inconvenience, as they then owned a goodly number. The disaffected party passed up the Schoharie river, piloted by an Indian. Brown says, they arrived, after a journey of five days, at the Cook-house,\* where they made canoes, in which they went down the Susquehanna. Here is a trifling error in his

\* I make the following extract from a letter from the Hon. Erastus Root, of the New York Senate, in answer to several inquiries, dated Albany, April 11th, 1843. " You ask whence originated the name of Cook House. Various derivations have been given, but the most natural and probable one is this—That on the large flat bearing the name, being on the way from Cohecton, by the Susquehanna and Chemung to Niagara, there was a hut erected, where some cooking utensils were found. It had probably been erected by some traveler who had made it his stopping place and had cooked his provisions there. It has been stated to me as a part of the tradition, that the hut remained many years as a resting place to the weary traveler, and that the rude cooking utensils were permitted to remain as consecrated to the use of succeeding sojourners." General Root went to reside in Delaware county in 1796.

pamphlet, as the Cook-house is on the Delaware river. As he says, they passed down the Susquehanna, preparing their canoes for that purpose, near the mouth of the Charlotte river. Nicholas Warner, one of the oldest citizens of Schoharie county, in the fall of 1837, assured the author that he had seen the stumps of the trees on the Charlotte branch of the Susquehanna, which Weiser and his friends felled to make the canoes from, in which they floated down the river. Their cattle and horses were driven along the shore, and were frequently in sight of the water party, until the latter left their canoes. Weiser and his followers settled at a place called Tulpehocken, in Berks county, Pennsylvania, on the north side of a creek of that name; where, it is said, he became a distinguished and useful citizen.\* The party probably settled near their countrymen who emigrated from Germany at the time they did, and located in that State. Most of the families which followed the fortunes of Weiser, were from Weiser's and Hartman's dorfs. Hartman Winteker removed at the same time to Pennsylvania. Whether they had to purchase lands in Tulpehocken, I cannot say. Few of Weiser's party ever revisited Schoharie: several old men did, however, nearly fifty years after. A singular circumstance is said to have transpired, showing the instinct of the horses which accompanied the emigration to Pennsylvania. Twelve of those noble animals left their master's cribs, and after an absence from them of a year and a half, ten of them, in good condition, arrived at Schoharie: a distance through the wilderness of over three hundred miles. It is possible they remembered the sweet clover† of Weiser's dorf, and longed again to munch it.

Two instances of brute instinct, not dissimilar to the one rela-

\* In 1744, one Conrad Weiser was Indian interpreter for the colony of Pennsylvania, who was, doubtless, the swift-footed son of the one named in the context.

† The land through which the little Schoharie kill, in Middleburgh, runs to the river, is to this day called the *clauver wy*, which signifies the clover pasture. When the Schoharie valley was first settled, the land along that stream was thickly covered with clover, which was seen in few other places about the Schoharie: hence the appropriate name.

ted, were told the author by Mrs. Van Slyck. About the year 1770, the Bartholomews removed from New Jersey to the Charlotte river. Soon after their arrival there, three of their horses disappeared, and after much unsuccessful searching for them, it was concluded they had strayed away and become a prey to wild beasts. Judge the surprise of the owners to learn after some time, that one of them had been taken up within two, and another within five miles of their former residence. The third was found by them near Catskill.

The other story is perhaps the most singular of the two, as the horse has given numberless instances of remarkable sagacity. Not many years from the period above cited, Ephraim Morehouse removed in the spring from Dutchess county to the vicinity of the Charlotte river. He passed through the Schoharie valley on his way, and tarried over night with Samuel Vrooman, father of my informant, with whom he was acquainted. He drove with his cattle a large sow with a bell on. As Morehouse approached the end of his journey, the sow disappeared. After considerable delay in a fruitless search for her, he proceeded on his way. In the following autumn he revisited the place of his former residence, and on his return again tarried over night with Vrooman. He then related the circumstance of losing his sow, and again finding her. She had returned to the old sty in due time, to the great surprise of the neighborhood. Whether she retraced her way by the same path or not is unknown; but to reach her former place, had been compelled to swim the Hudson, and perform a solitary journey of one hundred miles.

About the time Weiser and his friends left Schoharie, there were others among the dissatisfied, who, not choosing to follow his fortunes, sought a future residence in the Mohawk valley. Elias Garlock, the founder of Garlock's dorf, removed to the Mohawk, accompanied by several of his neighbors. Some of the party had relatives or friends there who located at the time the Schoharie settlements were begun, which induced them to remove thither. They settled in and about Canajoharie, at Stone Arabia, or upon the German Flats.

Tradition has preserved but little in the life of Justice Garlock, the most noted of the Schoharie Germans, who removed to the Mohawk valley. He is said, while there, to have been the only justice of the peace in the Schoharie valley. The name of the shrewd constable who aided him in administering the few laws by which they were governed, has been lost. Only one important decision of this sage justice is known to the author. His summons was usually delivered to the constable *viva voce*, and thus by him to the transgressor of the law. If the justice wished to bring a culprit before him, he gave his jack-knife to the constable, who carried it to the accused, and required him at the appointed time to appear with it before the justice. What it meant he well understood. If two were to be summoned at the same time, to the second he gave the tobacco-box of the justice, and as that usually contained a liberal supply of the delectable narcotic, the consequences of a failure to return it in person to the justice, in due time, were dangerous in the extreme. The decision of Justice Garlock alluded to, terminated so happily for those most interested, that I cannot withhold it from the reader. A complaint having been entered before him, the knife was issued, and the parties assembled forthwith. The plaintiff told his story, which appeared simple and true. The defendant, with more zeal and eloquence, plead his cause—quoting, if I mistake not, some previous decisions of his honor—and made out, as he thought, an equally good case. After giving the parties a patient hearing, the justice gave the following very important decision. “Der blandif an derfendur bote hash reght; zo I dezides, an pe dunder, der knonshtopple moosh bay de kosht.”

## CHAPTER III.

After the removal of Weiser and others from Schoharie, the difficulties to which the ignorance and suspicions of the people had subjected them, were soon quieted, and they once more became a happy community. They were careful afterwards to secure legal titles to their lands, and thereby remove the danger of troubles in future, from a cause which had already tended greatly to decrease their numbers, and harrass their feelings.

There were, as I have been informed, several apple trees standing on the flats near the present dwelling of John Ingold, at the time the Germans arrived, supposed to have been planted by the Indians. One of these antiquated trees, at least 140 years old, was still standing in 1842, and very fruitful. Other trees of the same planting were yet bearing fruit in 1837. The trees from which the first apple orchards in Schoharie were derived, were procured, as Judge Brown assured me, in the following manner. One Campbell and several other individuals went from the Schoharie valley to New York, to be naturalized, a few years after the settlement was commenced. Their business accomplished, they started for home on board of a sloop; but not having money enough to pay their passage to Albany, they were landed at or near Rhinebeck, and traveled from thence on foot. Crossing the Rhinebeck flats, each pulled up a bundle of small apple trees in the nurseries they passed, from which the first orchards in Schoharie were planted.

The second season after the murder of his agent Truax, in Vrooman's Land, Peter Vrooman returned to that place and established a permanent residence. He planted an apple orchard,



which is yet standing, near the dwelling of Harmanus Vrooman. Some of the Swarts, Eckers, Zielleys, Haggidorns, Feecks, and Beckers, with perhaps some other Dutch families, settled in that vicinity about the same time.

There were few regular mechanics among the first settlers, on which account the native genius of all was more or less taxed. We have seen to what inconvenience and labor they were subjected for the want of mills. The first grist mill in the county was erected by Simeon Laraway, on the small stream called Mill brook, from that circumstance, which runs into Fox's creek near Waterbury's mills. Upon a bridge which crossed this brook, Sheriff Adams was left, after having had ocular demonstration of the prowess of Magdalene Zeh, in the first anti-rent war. Some part of the race-way of this mill is still to be seen. Before the erection of Simeon's mill, as usually called, several hand mills, like the one at Weiser's dorf, were in frequent use. In the course of twenty or thirty years after Weiser and his friends left, several other mills were established in and about Schoharie. One Cobel erected two of those.\* One of them was built on a small brook in a ravine on the south side of the road, a few rods distant from the river bridge, one mile from the Court House. The other mill he erected about the same time on Cobelskill, which took its name from that circumstance. It stood near the mouth of the kill. It was not until about the year 1760, that bolting cloths were used in Schoharie. Henry Weaver, who owned a mill near where Becker's now stands, on Foxes creek, was the first who introduced them.

At almost as late a period as the revolution, the colonists pro-

\* This creek took its name after the paternal name of the mill-wright, as Judge Brown assured me. I find the name written *Cobels kill* in many of the old conveyances, and in all the early Session laws, of the state. It is, in truth, the correct orthography of the word. In writing Fox's and Cobel's kill, I shall in future omit the apostrophe and hyphen, for reasons obvious to the reader.

The Indians called Cobelskill the *Ots-ga-ra-gee* which signified the hemp creek. When first settled by the whites, an abundance of wild hemp grew along its banks. The natives often visited them to procure it, making from it fish nets, and ropes to aid them in transporting their portable wealth.

cured most of their shoes at Albany, or East Camp ; and one pair was the yearly allowance for each member of the family. They were repaired by traveling cobblers.

Those unaffected Germans were not *votaries to fashion*, of course they were not very particular about receiving their male fashions from England, or their female from France. The good wife and daughters generally cut and made the rude apparel of the family, and thought it *no disgrace*. The settlers manufactured most of their own buttons, and often the same garment had on those of very different sizes, of wood, horn, bone or lead.

Not having been accustomed to luxuries from childhood, they were contented with simple fare and uncouth fashions. Their clothes, as may be supposed, did not set out a good form to very fascinating advantage. Those useless bipeds denominated *dandies*, noted for their mustaches, idleness and empty pockets, were unknown in the Schoharie valley at that day ; indeed, they are strangers there at the present time. Of course, other considerations than mere dress, or a display of jewelry, could create, influenced their choice of a partner for life. They had little to be proud of, consequently many of the men did not shave oftener than once or twice a month. A Dow or a Matthias would hardly have been distinguished from them, had they appeared at that day. Habituating themselves to do men's work, many of the women were, from exposure, sun-burnt and coarse featured, and in some instances it became necessary for them to clip an exuberant growth of beard, which was done with scissors.

Lawrence Schoolcraft, one of the first settlers in Schoharie, at the residence of Peter Vrooman, made the first cider in the county. The manner of making it being unique, was as follows. The apples were first pounded in a stamper similar to the Indian corn stamper before mentioned. After being thus bruised, the pumice was placed in a large Indian basket previously suspended to a tree, beneath which was inserted a trough, made by fastening together the edges of two planks, which served to catch and carry the juice compressed by weights in the basket, into some vessel placed for its reception. In the year 1752, one Brown, the father

of Judge Brown, removed from West Camp to Schoharie. He was then a widower, and soon after his arrival married a widow, who possessed ten acres of land and about one hundred and ten pounds in cash ; which enabled him to establish and carry on his trade successfully. He was a wheel-wright, and the first who prosecuted that business in the county. The people had manufactured a kind of rude wagon before his arrival, with which they transported light loads to and from Albany, performing the journey in about five days. This Brown, in 1753, made the first *cider-press* ever used in the county. The same process which prepared the pumice for Schoolcraft did for Brown, as he purchased the same pounder. The press was first used at Hartman's dorf, where he resided.

John Mattice Junk, or Young in English, the grand-father of Judge Brown, on the Mother's side, is said to have taught the first German school at the Camps, ever taught in America. This was about the year 1740. Schools began to be taught in the Schoharie settlements shortly after ; one Spease kept the first, and one Keller the next. German teachers were employed in the German settlements, while at Vrooman's land a school was taught in Dutch. About the year 1760, English instruction was introduced into those schools, and in some instances the English, German and Dutch languages were all taught by one teacher, in the same school. Little attention was then paid to the convenience or comfort of the scholars. Barns, in some instances, became *school-houses* as well as *churches*, in the summer ; and if schools were continued in the winter, some rude log dwelling became a witness to the child's improvement. Stoves, in those days, were unknown. The settlers had mammoth fire-places, however, and plenty of wood ; and in numberless instances, a fearful proportion of a cord was seen ignited in the same fire.

Few horses were shod for many years after the settlement began ; and those persons, who required any kind of smith-work their own ingenuity could not create, were obliged to go to Albany or Schenectada to get it done. John Ecker is said to have

been the first black-smith in the Schoharie valley, and he was a self instructed one.

The Germans formerly brewed a kind of domestic strong beer, and most of those in Schoharie brewed their own.

From the fact, that the Dutch, who settled in Vrooman's Land, were more wealthy than their German neighbors located below them, a kind of pride or distant formality, was manifested by the former towards the latter for many years. When prejudices of any kind are allowed to gain a place in the human breast, it often requires generations to eradicate them. The prejudices alluded to as having existed between the Dutch and Germans, tended for many years almost wholly to prevent inter-marriages between them. The former, therefore, who did not choose to marry cousins—most of those settlers being related—went to Schenectada or Albany for wives. As Cupid is now and then a very mischievous boy, there may have been individual instances, in which the irresistible passion of love, aided by stratagem, trampled paternal prejudices under foot, and united the sturdy German and amorous Dutch maiden. But we must suppose such cases extremely rare, as the law which still requires in some parts of New England, the publishing of the bans for several Sabbaths preceding the nuptials, was then in force in New York.

The Germans, when they located at Schoharie, owned no slaves, nor, indeed, did they for several years; but these accompanied the Dutch on their arrival as a part of their gear. By industry, and a proper husbanding of what the earth produced, the wealth of the former increased rapidly, and it was not long before they, too, possessed them.

The manner in which the slaves of Schoharie were generally treated by their masters, is not inaptly described by *Mrs. Grant*, in her *Memoirs of Albany*. They were allowed freedom of speech, and indulged in many things, which other members of the family were, whose ages corresponded to their own; and to a superficial spectator, had the color not interfered, they would have seemed on an equality. Individual instances may now be cited where blacks would be much better off under a good master than they now

are, or, indeed, than thousands of the operatives of England are—still, no one can from moral principle, although he may from motives of expediency, advocate the continuance of the evil as just and proper in any country. The existence of slavery in the United States, is the greatest stain upon their national escutcheon. This I believe to be a fact generally conceded, by all the good and virtuous in the land. The question then, which naturally arises, is, or rather it should be, what is the best and most proper manner of obliterating the stain? Let reason and common sense, not fanaticism and malice, reply.

Many of the tools used in husbandry in former days, were both clumsy and uncouth. Rakes used in Schoharie, were made with teeth on both sides. Hay forks were made of wood, from a stick having a suitable crotch for tines, or by splitting one end of a straight stick and inserting a wedge. The improvement made in plows since that time, is perhaps as great as that made on any one implement of the cultivator. The wagons seen in Schoharie before the year 1760, had no tire upon the wheels.

Grain was then thrashed, as it is at the present day by the descendants of those people who have no machines for the purpose, by the feet of horses. The process is simple, and as it is fast giving place to the buzzing of machines, it may be well to relate it. In the center of the barn floor, which is roomy, an upright bar is placed, previously rendered a pivot at each end, to enter a hole in the floor below, and a corresponding one in a beam or plank over head. Through this shaft, at a suitable height from the floor, a pole is passed, to which several horses are fastened so as to travel abreast. Sometimes a number are fastened to each end of the pole, and in some instances, a second pole is passed through the shaft at right angles with the first, to which horses are also attached. A quantity of sheaves being opened and spread upon the floor, the horses are started at a round trot, thus trampling the grain from the straw. The upright, when the horses move, turns upon its own pivots. Persons in attendance, are constantly employed in turning and shaking the straw with a fork, keeping the horses in motion, removing any uncleanness, &c. The outside



horse travels, as may be supposed, much farther in his circuits than the inside one, for which reason they are occasionally shifted. Grain is broken less if thrashed with unshod horses. Some use a roller to aid in the process. This is a heavy, rounded timber, worked much smaller at one end than the other, with square pins of hard wood inserted at proper distances the whole length. The smallest end of this roller is so fastened to the shaft as to preserve the horizontal motion of one, and the perpendicular motion of the other, at the same time. To the heavy end of the roller, horses are fastened, drawing it on the same principle, that the stone wheel in an ancient bark mill was drawn. In threshing with horses, the roller is a great assistance. Fanning-mills, for cleaning grain, were unknown in former times, it being separated from its chaff by fans, or shoveling it in the wind.

As I have already stated, much prejudice existed at Schoharie in former days, between the Germans and Dutch. These national antipathies were manifested in nothing more clearly at first, than in matters of *religion*. The early Germans were, almost without exception, disciples to the doctrines of Martin Luther; while the Dutch, collectively, subscribed the Calvinistic, or Dutch Reformed creed. Time, however, the great healer of dissensions, aided by intelligence, the champion of liberality, by degrees lessened, and has now almost entirely removed those prejudices. While they existed, they tended to prevent that friendly interchange of good feeling—that reciprocity of kindness, so necessary to the prosperity and happiness of an isolated people. As Judge Brown remarked, at our interview, “the Low Dutch girls formerly thought but little of the High Dutch boys,” and the young people of both settlements kept separate companies for many years. In a few instances, elopement took place, but they were rare, as distant ministers were cautious about uniting a couple who could not produce a certificate of publication, although ocular demonstration might convince them of the genuineness of their affection, and demand their union.

Among the first shoemakers who worked at the trade in Schoharie, was one William Dietz. Few, if any, boots were then

worn. Men wore low, and women high heeled (called French heeled) shoes. A specimen of the latter may now be seen in the Cabinet of John Gebhard, jr. Esq., at Schoharie Court House. Shoes were then fastened with buckles, which, like those worn at the knees, were made of silver, brass or pewter. Caleb Cosput and John Russeau were the first tailors. They worked, as did the first shoemakers, by *whipping the cat*—from house to house. Breeches and even coats were made of deer-skins, and in some instances, of blankets, in their day: the former being fastened to striped hose at the knees with huge buckles, of silver, if attainable, if not, of brass or pewter.

One Delavergne was the first hatter, and is said to have been well patronized. Cocked, or three cornered hats were then the tip of fashion.

To see an *exquisite* of the present, dressed in the costume of that day, with hair long-cramped before, and terminating at the neck in a braided cue, or if not braided, wound with black ribbon or an eel-skin, the whole head being finely powdered and surmounted with a cocked hat; with a blanket coat on, of no ordinary dimensions, ornamented with various kinds of buttons; breeches of deer-skin, too tight for comfort, and kept up without braces by a tight band above the hips, allowing the nether garment to appear between them and the vest, and fastened at the knee with large bright buckles to a pair of striped silk hose; the whole of the fabric described, resting upon a pair of pedestals cased in pen-knife pointed shoes clasped with daring buckles; the hero with a pipe in his mouth, the bowl as large as a tea-cup—would be worth far more to the spectator, than to visit a menagerie and see half a dozen country girls mounted upon the back of an elephant, or a fool-hardy keeper enter a cage with the most ferocious animals.

Fish are said to have been very plenty formerly in most of the streams in Schoharie county. For many years after the Revolution, trout were numerous in Foxes creek, where now there are few, if any at all. From a combination of causes, fish are now becoming scarce throughout the county. In many small streams,

they have been nearly or quite exterminated by throwing in lime. This cruel system of taking the larger, destroys with more certainty all the smaller fish. Such a mode of fishing cannot be too severely censured. The accumulation of dams on the larger streams, proves unfavorable to their multiplication. Fine pike are now occasionally caught in the Schoharie, as are also suckers and eels. Some eighty years ago, a mess of fish could have been taken, in any mill-stream in the county, in a few minutes.

Wild animals of almost every kind found in the same climate, were numerous in and about Schoharie, for a great length of time after the whites arrived. Bears and wolves, the more gregarious kinds, often appeared in droves numbering scores, and in some instances, hundreds; and were to the pioneer a source of constant anxiety and alarm. Deer, which were then very numerous, the mountainous parts affording them, as all other animals, a safe retreat, are still killed some winters in considerable numbers, in the south part of the county. But few incidents, worthy of notice, relating to wild animals, have come to my knowledge. One of the first German settlers was killed by a bear, between the residence of the late Cyrus Swart (near the stone church,) and the hill east of it. He had wounded the animal with a gun, when it turned upon, and literally tore him in pieces. The Indians hunted them for food, and not unfrequently had an encounter with them. Nicholas Warner assured the author, that when a boy, he saw an Indian, called Bellows, returning from a hunt, holding in his own bowels with his hands. He had, after wounding a large bear, met it in personal combat, and although so terribly lacerated he slew it. Jacob Becker informed me, that there was an Indian about Foxes creek in his younger days, called *The-bear-catcher*, who received his name from the following circumstance. He was hunting—treed a large bear and fired upon it. The beast fell and a personal rencounter ensued. The Indian, in the contest, seized with an iron grasp the lower jaw of Bruin, and a back-hug was the consequence. He succeeded in holding his adversary so firmly that the latter could not draw his paws between their bodies. Bruin had, however, in the outset, succeeded in drawing one of

them obliquely across the breast of the red man, scarifying it in a fearful manner. While thus situated, holding his adversary at bay, he called to a son, who was hunting in the woods not far off, for his assistance. The latter repaired hastily to the spot, and although he might at times have approved of a fair fight, in the present instance paternal affection demanded his immediate interference. Placing the muzzle of his rifle between the extended jaws of the bear, he discharged it, to the great relief of his father, who had been so affectionately embraced. The following adventure was related by Andrew Loucks. One Warner, who was among the first settlers at Punch-kill, went out towards evening to seek his cows. He met in his path a large bear, having cubs, which instantly pursued him. He ran for safety behind a large tree; round which himself and madam Bruin played bo-peep for some time—neither gaining any advantage. At length Warner seized a hemlock knot, and with it, Sampson like, slew his shaggy pursuer. The following story was also told me by Jacob Becker, the scene in which is said to have been enacted near Foxes creek. John Shaeffer and George Schell went hunting. Shaeffer had a dog which treed a bear, and he being near at the time, instantly fired upon it. Bruin fell, though not passively to yield life. The dog attacked him, but was so lovingly hugged, that his eyes seemed starting from their sockets, and he cried piteously. Shaeffer thought too much of his canine friend to see him fall a victim to such affection, and endeavored to loosen one of the bear's paws: but as he seized it, it was relaxed and quicker than thought thrown round again, so as to include in the embrace his own arm. Shaeffer might as easily have withdrawn his hand from a vise. When he found he had caught a *tartar*, or, rather, that the bear had, he hallooed like a loon for his companion to come to his assistance and reach him his tomahawk. Many of the white hunters, in former times, were as careful to wear tomahawks as their Indian neighbors. The missile was handed very cautiously at arms' length, and Shaeffer buried the blade of it in the brains of his game, to the relief of his other arm and the resuscitation of the dog. Bruin, as may be supposed, did not relish the interfer-

ence of the master, when he was evincing so much of the *world's genuine love* for Carlo.

The three most prominent hills east of Middleburgh village, are] called the Fire-berg, the Amos-berg, and the Clipper-berg. The first named is the most southern, and took its name (as Geo. Warner informed the author) from the following circumstance. A tar barrel having been raised to the top of a tall tree on that hill, it was, at a particular hour of a certain night, set on fire, to ascertain if the light could be seen from the residence of Sir William Johnson, in Johnstown, at whose instigation it was done. Whether it was seen there or not, tradition does not inform us, but the circumstance was sufficient to originate a name for the hill. Amos-berg, the next one north, signifies the ant-hill, or hill of ants; it having been, in former times, literally covered with those insect mounds. Clipper-berg, directly north of Amos-berg, signifies the rocky-hill, or hill scantily covered with vegetation.

The following story was related to me by Maria Teabout. She with several other individuals, was on the Fire-berg before the revolution, when a loud scream like that of a child was heard some distance off, to which she made answer by a similar one. She was told by the men to keep still, that it was a *painter*, and by answering it they would be in great danger. "A painter!" she exclaimed, "what then is a painter?" Being young and heedless, she continued to answer its cries, until her companions, alarmed for their own safety, had taken to flight, and she found herself alone. As she was part native she felt little fear, until the near approach of the animal struck terror upon her mind. She had not time enough left her to secure a safe retreat, but instantly concealed herself in a hollow tree. The animal approached so near that she saw it from her concealment, but as that did not see her, it went back in the direction from whence it came. In the meantime, those who had fled on the panther's approach, went home and reported Maria as slain in an awful manner. A party, consisting of Col. Zielie, with half a dozen of his neighbors, and a few Indians, all mounted on horseback and armed with



guns, set out to seek and bring whatever of Maria might be left, after the panther had satiated his appetite. Leaving their horses near the entrance, they went into the woods and began to call to her. She heard the voice of Col. Zielie, and came out from her hiding place. The Indians then declared they would soon have the panther. After fixing a blanket on a tree so as to present a tolerable effigy of one of their party, they all fell back and concealed themselves behind trees. An Indian then began to call, and was soon answered by the animal, which approached stealthily. When it came in sight, it fixed its eye on the effigy, and crawling along with the stillness of a cat, it approached within a few paces, from whence, after moving its tail briskly for a few seconds, it bounded upon it with the speed of an arrow. In an instant the blanket was torn into strings, and as the disappointed animal stood lashing its sides furiously with its tail, looking for the cause of the voice, (panthers having no knowledge or belief in ghosts) and its deception, a volley of rifle balls laid it dead on the spot. The skin was taken off, and some slices of the *critter*, as Natty Bumpo would call it, were taken home by several of the Indians to broil. Thus ended the panther, and thus did not end my informant. Few panthers have been killed in the county since the remembrance of any one living in it. One of the last was shot near the residence of John Enders, on Foxes creek.

The sagacious beaver was a resident of this county on the arrival of the Germans. They were numerous along Foxes creek, and at a place called the Beaver-dam, on that stream, which is now in the town of Berne, Albany county, they had several strong dams.

Wild-cats were numerous in Schoharie formerly. The following anecdote is related of old Doctor Moulter, a sort of physician who lived on Foxes creek, and flourished about the time of the Revolution. He awoke one night from pleasant dreams, to hear an unusual noise among his setting geese. Without waiting to dress, or seize upon any weapon, he ran out to learn the cause of alarm. On arriving at the scene of action, although his prospect was yet sombre, he discovered the cause of disturbance in the ap-

pearance of an unwelcome animal, that was paying its devoirs to the comely neck of the mistress of a polluted bee-hive. He ran up and seized it by the neck and hind legs, and although it struggled hard to regain its liberty, he succeeded in holding it until his boys, to whom he called for assistance, came and killed it. The reader may judge his surprize as well as that of his family, when, on taking it to the light, it proved to be a good sized wild-cat. Had he caught hold of it otherwise than he did, it is highly probable that in his state of almost native nudity, he would have repented his grasp, if not lost his life. Many anecdotes are told of this same Dr. Moulter. When he located at Schoharie, he was afraid to ride on horseback, unless some one led his horse by the bridle. Those who led his nag for him, grew tired of gratifying his whims, and would occasionally let go his reins, and leave him to shift for himself. This kind of treatment soon taught the old Doctor the skill of horsemanship. He is said to have doctored for witches, and promulged the superstitious doctrine of witchcraft. Nor was he wanting in believers, as no dogmas, however *doggish* they may be, need much preaching to gain proselytes.

Francis Otto, who is said to have established the first distillery in the county, (which was for cider-brandy, and stood perhaps half a mile east of the present site of the Court House) was also a kind of doctor. In fact, he was one of that useful class, who can turn their hand to almost anything; being a brandy-maker, a doctor, a phlebotomist, a barber, a fortune-teller, etc., as occasion required. He too, believed in witchcraft. His death took place just before the Revolution, in the following manner. He had spent the evening at the house of Ingold, where now stands the dwelling of John Ingold; and left there to go home, with the bosom of his shirt, his general traveling store-house, filled with apples. He may, to have kept off the chill of the evening, and increase his courage, tasted a potation of his own distilling, of which he was very fond. On the following morning he was found in a bruised state, having fallen off the rocks not far from his own dwelling. He was alive when found, but died soon af-

ter. As he was much afraid of witches, and the like evil genii, it was confidently asserted and generally believed, that witches had thrown him off the rocks. Thus ended the first distiller, poor Otto, of bewitching memory.

Deer, it has been remarked, were numerous in and about Schoharie formerly. Jacob Becker related the following story, which he had learned from his father. An old Indian, who lived in Garlock's dorf, was very skillful in the use of the bow and arrow. This Indian stationed himself one day, at a run-way the deer had on the north side of Foxes creek, not a great distance from Becker's mill. It was at a place where there is a small stream of water descends from the hill, affording a kind of path from that to the flats below. At this place this Indian was concealed, when a noble deer came leisurely down the declivity. An arrow from his bow pierced the heart of the unsuspecting victim, when it bounded forward a few paces and fell dead. Scarcely had he time to draw from his quiver an arrow, before another deer descended. A second arrow sped, and a second bleeding victim lay stretched near its fellow. Another and another descended to meet a similar fate, until six were, in quick succession, bleeding upon the ground. There were times, when, like the one named, the arrow was as trusty as the rifle ball. The distance must not be great, however, and the bow must be drawn by a skillful warrior. The arrow giving no report to alarm the following deer, the Indian was enabled, by his masterly skill, to bring down six, when a single discharge from a rifle, would have sent the five hindmost deer, on the back track. The arrow, however, would not tell upon a distant object like the rifle ball, and great muscular strength was required to send it, even at a short distance, to the heart of a bounding buck.

Rattle-snakes were very numerous formerly, along the north side of Foxes creek, and the west side of the Schoharie. Hundreds were often killed in a single day at either place. Neighborhoods turned out in the spring about the time they came from their dens, in the latter part of April, or early part of May, to destroy them, and by thus waging war against them, they were

nearly exterminated. There are a few remaining now at both places. It was not uncommon, in raising a sheaf of wheat from the ground, on the flats near the hills, which afford their favorite haunts, as early as the revolution, to find one or more of those venomous serpents under it. They were but little dreaded then, especially by the Indians, for if they could get at the wound with their mouth, suction, with their other applications, generally saved the bitten. *The Indians*, said Andrew Loucks, *rubbed their legs with certain roots, to avoid being bitten by rattle-snakes*, and made use of several kinds of roots and plants, in effecting a cure for the bite of those reptiles. The knowledge they had of botany, although limited, was of a practical nature, and enabled them not unfrequently to effect a cure, when a similar application of a scientific mineral compound, would have destroyed. This country, undoubtedly, affords an herb for almost every disease of the climate, and more attention should be paid to the study and medical application of *Botany*. Rattle-snakes diminish rapidly in numbers, if hogs are allowed to run where they infest. They will eat them invariably, with the exception of the head, whenever they take them. There are *individuals*, in fact, who eat those venomous reptiles, and pronounce them palatable. The late Major Van Vechten, of Schoharie, formerly ate them, and at times invited his friends to the banquet. On one occasion, he had several young gentlemen to partake with him, who, as I suppose, were either ambitious to be able to say they had eaten of a "serpent," or desired to rattle a little as they went through the world. Did they taste exceedingly flavorful, one would suppose the idea of eating a *rattle-snake* would sicken the eater, save in extreme cases of approaching starvation.

The following Indian custom was humorously told the author by George Warner. When Cupid has destroyed the red man's peace of mind, he provides himself with a quantity of corn, and seeks the presence of the ruddy squaw. He then commences snapping kernels at the coy maid he wishes to woo. If she snaps them back, the contract is considered firmly made. If she does not, the lover is led to conclude she "don't take," and leaves

her presence somewhat mortified. If matters proceed favorably and a contract is made, she takes off one garter, and after the marriage ceremony is performed, he probably takes off the other—if, by the by, she has ever had any on.

The Schoharie Indians, says Brown, claimed the lands lying about Schoharie, and made some sales, but were interrupted in those transfers of lands by the Mohawks, who proved that the land given to Karighondontee's wife, at the time her husband settled, was to be no more than would be required to plant as much corn as a squaw could hold in her petticoat; which, he adds, would be reckoned about a skipple. A squaw's petticoat neither has great length or breadth; but the reader will understand that the grain was carried in the garment in the manner of a sack.

But a few years after the Schoharie Germans had their difficulties with Bayard, the royal agent, and Sheriff Adams, they began to secure land not only of the seven partners, but also of the natives, and made transfers among themselves.

A bond in the writer's possession, given for what is unknown, by "John Andrews of Score, [Schoharie] to John Lawer [Lawyer,] for twenty-six pounds three shillings, corrant money of New York. Dated the 3d day of May, in the fifth year of our Sovereign Lord George [I.] king of Great Britain, France and Ireland, and in the year of our Lord God, 1720; shows the earliest date of any paper I have met with, that was executed between the early settlers in the Schoharie valley. This date is within ten years of their first arrival. The bond is written in a fair, legible hand, and most of the orthography is correct.

In the early conveyances, lands in the vicinity of the Schoharie Court House, were located at "Fountain's town, Fountain's flats, and Brunen or Bruna dorf." Some of the old deeds bound those lands on the "west, by the Schoharie river, and on the east, on the king's road." The road then ran near the hill east of the old Lutheran parsonage house, which is still standing; leaving nearly all the flats west of it. In ancient patents, the brook



above Middleburgh village is called the Little Schoharie ; which name I have chosen to continue.

Many of the Indian sales of lands in Schoharie county, were legalized by the governor and council of the colony. The following paper, which is copied verbatim et literatim, will show the usual form of a *royal permit* :

“ By His Excellency the Hon. George Clinton, Captain-General and Governor in Chief of the colony of New  
L. S. York, and Territories thereon depending in America,  
Vice Admiral of the same and Admiral of the White  
Squadron of his Majesty's Fleet.

“ To all to whom these presents shall come or may concern,  
Greeting :—

“ Whereas Johannes Becker, jr., Johannes Schafer, jr., Hendrick Schafer, jr., and Jacobus Schafer, by their humble petition presented unto me and read in Council this Day, have prayed my license to purchase in his Majesty's name, of the native Indian proprietors thereof, six thousand Acres of some vacant Lands, Situate, Lying and being in the County of Albany, on the North side of the Cobelskill, and on the East of the Patent lately granted to Jacob Borst, Jacob C. Teneyck and others near Schoharie : in order to obtain His Majesty's Letters Patent for the same or a proportionate quantity thereof. I have therefore thought fit to give and grant, and I do by and with the Advice of his Majesty's Council, hereby give and grant unto the said Petitioners, full Power, Leave and license to purchase in his Majesty's Name of the Native Indian Proprietors thereof, the Quantity of Six thousand Acres of the vacant Lands aforesaid. Provided the said purchase be made in one year next after the Date hereof, and conformable to a report of a Committee of His majesty's Council of the second day of December, 1736, on the Memorial of Cadwallader Colden, Esq., representing several Inconveniences arising by the usual Method of purchasing Lands from the Indians. And for so doing this shall be to them a sufficient license.

“ Given under my Hand and Seal at Arms, at Fort  
George, in the City of New York, the sixteenth Day of  
November, one thousand seven hundred and fifty-two.

“ By his Excellency's command, G. CLINTON.”

“ GEO. BANYAR, D. Sec'y.”

A conveyance made in December, 1752, of fifteen thousand acres of land in “ New Dorlach,” now in the town of Seward—bounds it on “ West creek”—west branch of the Cobelskill beginning at a bank called in an Indian conveyance, “ *Onc-en-ta-*

*dashe*." This I suppose to have been the Indian name of the mountain south of Hyndsville. When the county of Tryon was organized, it took in "New Dorlach;" which was embraced in Otsego county on its organization; and subsequently became a part of Schoharie county.

The parties to an indenture, made November 30th, 1753, were Johannes Scheffer, Christ Jan Zehe, Johannes Lawyer, Michael Borst, Johannes Borst, Johan Jost Borst, Michael Hilking, William Baird, Jacob Borst, Michael Bowman, Johannes Brown, Barent Keyser, Peter Nicholas Sommer, Johannes Lawyer Ser, Hendrick Heens, and William Brown." It was a purchase of fifteen thousand acres of land on the north side of the "Ostgarree or Cobelskill, about seven miles westerly from Schoharre."

The author has in his possession, a parchment copy of letters patent, dated March 19, 1754. It was granted in the reign of George II., under the administration of George Clinton as governor, and James De Lancey lieutenant-governor, to John Frederick Bauch, [now written Bouck,] Christian Zehe, Johannes Zehe, Michael Wanner, [Warner,] and Johannes Knisker, [Kneiskern,] "For a certain Track of Land lately purchased by them of the Native Indian proprietors thereof, situate, lying and being in the county of Albany, to the westward of Schoharry, and on the south side of a creek or brook, called by the Indians *Ots-ga-ra-gee*, and by the inhabitants Cobelskill; containing about *four thousand eight hundred Acres*, and further bounded and described as by the Indian purchase thereof, bearing date the Ninth day of November last, might appear." The Patent grants among other things, *Fishings, Fowlings, Hunting and Hawking*; reserving at the same time *Gold and Silver* mines, and "All trees of the Diameter of Twenty-four Inches and upwards at twelve Inches from the ground, for Masts for our Royal Navy. And also all such other trees as may be fit to make planks, knees, and other things necessary for the use of our said Navy:" with the privilege of going on and cutting the timber thus reserved, at any time or in any manner. The following singular sentence appears in the patent. The purchasers, after being individually

named, were, with their heirs and assigns forever, "To be holden of us, our heirs and successors in fee and common socage, as of our Mannor of East Greenwich, in the County of Kent, within our Kingdom of Great Britain, yielding, rendering and paying therefor yearly, and every year forever, unto us our heirs and successors, at our Custom House in Our City of New York, unto our Collector or Receiver General there for the time being, on the feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary, commonly called Lady day, the yearly Rent of *two shillings and six pence* for each and every hundred acres of the above granted Lands, and so in proportion for any lesser quantity thereof." Within three years after the date of the patent, the purchasers whose interest was equal, were required "to settle and effectually cultivate at least *three Acres* of every *fifty Acres*, of the land capable of cultivation." The conveyance was to be invalidated by the wanton burning of the growing timber.

About the year 1760, says *Brown*, the Mohawks began to sell large tracts of land around Schoharie, through Sir William Johnson, who was a royal agent of Indian affairs for the six nations of New York, and liberally paid by the British Government. These conveyances to be legal, he adds, were required to be made in his presence, he usually taking good care to secure a valuable interest to himself.

Land was considered of little value among the pioneer settlers of New York, and large tracts were often disposed of for an inconsiderable sum. The following certificate, found among the papers of the late Philip Schuyler of Schoharie, will serve to show from its vague limits, the value set by the owner on a large tract of now valuable land.

"I do hereby certify to have sold to Messrs. Philip Schuyler and Abraham Becker, and their associates, the Flats of the Cook House with an equal quantity of upland near the path going to Ogwage [Oquago].—And I hereby permit them to take up or mark off any quantity of land they may farther think proper, on the west side the said Cook House branch, granted to me, the subscriber, by the Governor and Council of this province of New York.

Albany, 19th June, 1773.

TH. BRADSTREET."

Attached to this certificate is an affidavit made by George Mann in 1818, before Peter Swart, a Judge of the court of common pleas for Schoharie county, which states that in the month of June, 1773, being then at the Indian village of "Orgquago," he saw "Philip Schuyler pay to the Chiefs of the Indian tribe of the same name, in behalf of John Bradstreet, the sum of one hundred dollars, which he understood to be money received by them in consideration of a deed for a certain tract of land given by the said Chiefs to the said Bradstreet, and which land was situated on the west branch of the Delaware river, commonly called the Koke-house branch.\* He adds that Alexander Campbell, John H. Becker and David Becker, were also present at the time.

I have before remarked that the Schoharie people owned slaves. Many of them were either purchased in the New England states, or of New England men. A certificate of the sale of a black girl about *thirteen years of age*, given on the 7th day of July, 1762, by "John McClister of Connecticut, to Jacob Lawyer of Schohary," for the sum of *sixty pounds*, [\$150,] New York currency, will probably show the average value of female slaves at that day. At a later period, able bodied male slaves often sold as high as \$250. When slaves were purchased out of the Colony, a duty was required to be paid on them, as the following certificate of the Mayor of Albany will show.

"Theas are to Certify, y<sup>e</sup> Nine negro men and women has been Imported Into y<sup>e</sup> County of Albany from New England, and according to an Act of y<sup>e</sup> Governor, y<sup>e</sup> Council, and the generall Assembly; William Day has paid y<sup>e</sup> Duty for said negro men and women: witness my hand this twentieth Day of Aug<sup>r</sup>. 1762.

VOLKERT P<sup>r</sup>. DOUW, Mayor."

Five of the above mentioned slaves were sold at Schoharie.

While New York was a British province, public roads were called "The King's Highways," and were kept in repair by a tax levied by officers under the crown. Individuals were not compelled at that period to fence in their lands along the highways, but where the line fence between neighbors crossed them,

\* Koke is the Dutch of cook—to prepare to eat.

they placed gates. This was a source of constant vexation to the traveler, who often complained that more obstructions of the kind were stretched across the road, than necessity required. Accordingly, to remedy the evil, a legislative act was passed, by which those obstructions could only be placed across the *King's road* by a legal permit; signed by several of his Majesty's Justices of the peace. The traveler was annoyed by gates across the highway in thickly settled communities in the Mohawk and Schoharie valleys, for many years after the American revolution.

John Lawyer, named in the bond of 1720, and the father of one of the first white children born in Schoharie, was one of the principal settlers at Bruna dorf: and was the first merchant among those Germans—trading near the present residence of Andrew Beller, half a mile south of the Court House. He is said to have been a flax-hatcheler in Germany: and we must suppose, from the state of his finances on his arrival in the Schoharie valley, that he commenced a very limited business. The natives were among his most profitable customers; as he bartered blankets, Indian trinkets, calicoes, ammunition, rum, &c., with them, for valuable furs, dressed deer-skins, and other commodities of the times. He was one of the best informed among the Germans who settled the county; and before his death became an extensive land-holder. He was quite a business man and a useful citizen, aiding many who purchased land in making their payments; and acquired the reputation of a fair and honorable dealer.

He became a widower when about eighty years old, and married a widow in New York city. Arriving at Albany he sent word to have one of his sons come after him: but they were so offended to think he should marry at that age, that neither of them would go. One Dominick took the happy couple to Schoharie; where, we take it for granted, they spent the honeymoon. It has been stated that Lawyer had several children by this late marriage. Judge Brown assured the author he had indeed, but that they were many years old when he married their mother. A well executed family portrait of this *father* of the



Lawyers, in the fashion of that day, is now to be seen at the dwelling of the late Wm. G. Michaels, near the Court House. It was painted in New York, and tells credibly for the state of the *fine arts* at that period.

A second John Lawyer, who usually wrote his given name Johannes (the German of John), a son of the one mentioned above, succeeded his father in the mercantile business. He became a good surveyor, and surveyed much land in and around Schoharie county. He was also an extensive land-holder, owning at least twenty-five thousand acres of land, and his name appears in very many conveyances made in that county before the year 1760.

I have before me a copy of the *will* of this man, which was dated March 10th, 1760: by which it appears he was then a merchant. He had three sons and two daughters, and his will so disposed of his large estate, as to be equally distributed on the death of his widow, to the surviving children and the lawful heirs of the deceased ones.

Few parents at the present day in Schoharie county, imitate the commendable example of this wealthy man, and divide their property *equally* between sons and daughters. The latter, who are by nature the most helpless, are frequently unprovided for, and while a son or sons are enjoying the rich inheritance of a "wise father," a worthy daughter is sometimes compelled, on the death of her parents, either to marry against her own good sense and inclination, a man unworthy of her; or feel herself really dependant on the *charity* of those from whom she should not be compelled to ask it.

Johannes Lawyer was succeeded by a son, his namesake, in the mercantile business. He was also a surveyor, and transacted no little business. Lawrence Lawyer, one of his sons, who was still living in Cobelskill in 1837, informed me that some person in New York presented his father with a small cannon while in that city purchasing goods, a short time previous to the French war: and that during that war, whenever the Schoharie Indians,

who were engaged with the Mohawks under General, afterwards Sir Wm. Johnson, returned home with the scalps of ten or fifteen of the enemy, *this cannon was fired for joy*. Thus we perceive that the very cruel Indian custom of *scalping*, condemned in the savages during the Revolution about twenty years after, the whites had approved in the French war, and demonstrated that approval by the discharge of cannon. Can we blame the unlettered savage for continuing a custom *his fathers*—indeed *we ourselves* have taught him to think fair and honorable, by our own public approval and celebration? Ought we not rather to pity the degraded, injured Indian; and amid blushes, censure ourselves for encouraging his love of *cruelty* instead of *tender mercy*?

I learned from this old patriot, who was one of the early-settlers of Cobelskill, the origin of the name *Punch-kill*. His grandfather took a patent of lands adjoining this stream: and on running out the lines in making a survey, *punch* was made and freely drank on the premises, on which account the brook was called Punch-kill, and has been so called ever since. This kill is in the northeast part of the town, and falls into the stream of that name.

John I. Lawyer, who was a nephew of the second Schoharie merchant, was *learned out*, according to a phrase of the times, having received a share of his education in Boston, and proved a very correct surveyor. He was rather eccentric, and perhaps was not in all respects as happily married, as it is the good fortune of some men to be. An anecdote related of him which tends to show his character, is as follows: He had been accustomed for a long time to occupy a high chair at the table while eating. A grandson of his coming home after a long absence, who was a great favorite with his grandmother, she insisted on his having the high chair at the festive board. The old gentleman put up with the treatment for a few days, but at length growing impatient at such improper favoritism, he entered his dwelling as the table was setting, with a saw, and before any one

could stay proceedings, he raised the table and sawed off its legs. "*Now,*" said he to his wife, "*your favorite can have the high chair.*" The old lady cast her eyes on the sorry picture which the dishes in fragments on the floor presented, and began to storm—but it was of no use—the husband kept his temper. His voice was not *for war*. He went directly and procured a new set of dishes, and ever after he had no difficulty in occupying such a seat at his own table as he chose.

It was formerly customary, not only in Schoharie, but in almost every county in the state, to provide refreshments at *funerals*. Indeed, within twenty years, the custom of providing liquor on such occasions has been in vogue, and the bearers and friends of the deceased were expected to return to the house of mourning after the burial, and drink. Neither was it at all uncommon for people in those days to go home from a funeral drunk: but the barbarous and unfeeling custom of passing the intoxicating bowl on such occasions, has yielded to a better spirit. It is said that John Lawyer, the second one mentioned in this chapter, kept a barrel of wine for several years before his death to be drank at his funeral; that it was carried out on that occasion in pails, freely drank, and many were drunk of it. Cakes were carried round at such times in large baskets, and in some instances a funeral appeared more like a festival than the solemn sepulture of the dead. The old people give a reason somewhat plausible for the introduction of such a custom in this county. Its inhabitants were sparsedly settled over a large territory, and many had to go a great distance to attend funerals,—and as all could not be expected to eat a regular meal from home, those extra provisions were made for friends present from remote sections. A custom of that kind once introduced, *even if at the time justifiable*, it is easy to perceive might be continued in after years, until it became obnoxious to sympathy and highly reprehensible.

The following is the copy of a receipt, evidently in the hand writing of the second mentioned John Lawyer, his name being written as the contraction of Johannes. It was doubtless given as it purports, for liquor drank at a funeral.

"*Schoharie, March 29, 1738.*

"Then Received of John Schuyler the sum of Twenty Shilings for the five galing [gallons] of Rum at the Bearing [burying] of Maria Bratt. Recd by me. JOHS. LAWYER."

The Schoharie Indians had but few serious difficulties with the early white settlers. Judge Brown mentions in his pamphlet that a squaw once shot a man on the sabbath, while returning from Church. The Indians often had personal broils among themselves, and generally settled them in their own savage way. Brown also states that in his time he saw one William, a son of Jan, stab and kill another Indian at the house of David Becker, in Weiser's dorf. An eye-witness of the act informed the author, that the Indian killed was called John Coy. David Becker then kept a public house, which stood on the present site of the parsonage house belonging to the brick church in Middleburgh. John had a child in his arms in the bar-room, and was asked by William, another Indian, to drink with him. The former declined drinking, and walked out of the room upon a piazza in front of the house. William soon after followed him out and buried the blade of a long knife in his back—which he did not attempt to draw out—and departed. John died almost instantly. The cause of this assassination informant did not know: it is doubtless to be attributed to the red man's curse—*alcohol*.

Mrs. Van Slyck related the following traditionary story, which serves to illustrate the Indian character. At a house which stood on the farm now owned by Henry Vrooman, and contiguous to Wilder Hook, about the year 1750, one Indian stabbed another on the threshold of the door to the entrance into the upper part of it. The deed was committed in the evening, and was the result of a former quarrel. The tribe took little notice of the act, but when the corpse of the murdered man was about to be lowered into the grave, the father of the murderer required his son to get into it to dig one end deeper. He did so, and while standing there, the father sunk a tomahawk into his brains. He was laid down in the *narrow house* with his implements of war beside him—the other victim placed upon the body of his murderer, and both

buried together. Thus bodies which in life were rendered so hateful to each other by the savage spirits which controlled them, mingled into one common earth after death, by the fiendish act of a father ; who, by endeavoring to punish the believed wrong of a son, became himself the most guilty of the two. However unnatural an act like this may seem, it was by no means uncommon among the unlettered sons of the forest. The father often assumed the responsibility of punishing the son, and the son the father, for misdemeanors which might have a tendency to disgrace the avenger, even to the taking of life.

The following anecdote will show another peculiarity of the Indian character. One of the Schoharie Chiefs, named Lewis, is said to have gone to battle—probably in the French war,—scalped a squaw, taken her home as his prisoner, and afterwards made her his wife and the mother of his children.

The Indians were in the annual habit, to considerable extent, of taking up a temporary residence near corn fields—when the corn became eatable,—proving unprofitable neighbors to the whites.



CHAPTER IV.

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It has been the intention of the writer, as expressed in the preface, not to confine this work to the limits of Schoharie county, but to garner up as much *unpublished historic matter* as possible. Tradition has preserved but few of the personal adventures originated in the French war. The facts contained in the following sketch were narrated to the author in 1841, by John L. Groat.

In the year 1716, Philip Groat, of Rotterdam, made a purchase of land in the present town of Amsterdam. When removing to the latter place, Groat was drowned in the Mohawk near Schenectada, by breaking through the ice. He was in a sleigh accompanied by a woman, who was also drowned. His widow and three sons, Simon, Jacob and Lewis, the last named being then only four years old, with several domestics, made the intended settlement. In 1730, the Groat brothers erected a grist-mill at their place, (now Crane's village,) thirteen miles west of Schenectada—the first ever erected on the north side of the Mohawk. This mill, when first erected, floured wheat for citizens who dwelt upon the German flats, some fifty miles distant. The first bolting cloth in this mill, was put in by John Burns, a German, in 1772.

When hostilities commenced between England and France, in the war alluded to, Lewis Groat was living at the homestead. He was a widower at the time with five children ; and owning a farm and grist-mill, he was comparatively wealthy. In the afternoon of a summer's day in 1755, *two hundred Highland troops, clad in rich tartans*, passed up the valley on their way to Fort Johnson, six miles above—then the residence of Gen. William

Johnson. Groat, observing the swing gate across the road had been left open by the troops, went, after sun down, to shut it. When returning home, it began to rain, and for temporary shelter he stepped under a large oak tree : while there, three Indians, a father and sons, approached him. He took them to be Mohawks, and extending his hand to the oldest, addressed him in a friendly manner. The hand was received and firmly held by the Indian, who claimed Groat as his prisoner. Finding they were in earnest, and seeing them all armed with rifles, he surrendered himself. The captors belonged to the *Owenagunga*,\* or River tribe of Indians, whither they directed their steps. The object of their expedition, which was to capture several negroes, they soon disclosed to the prisoner, who told them if they would let him go across the river to Philips', he would send them some. "Yes," said the old Indian, holding his thumb and finger together so as to show the size of a bullet, "*you send Indian leetle round negar, he no like such.*"

They had proceeded but a few miles, when a pack was placed upon the back of the captive, after which he walked much slower than before. The old Indian threatened to kill him if he did not increase his speed. "*What can you get for a scalp?*" asked Groat. "*Ten livres,*" was the reply. "*And how much for a prisoner?*" he again asked. "*Two hundred livres,*" replied the Indian. "*Well,*" said Groat, "*if ten livres are better than two hundred, kill me and take my scalp !*" The Indian then told the prisoner that he would carry his own pack and the one apportioned him, if the latter would but keep up with the party. The proposition was acceded to, and they moved forward—the old Indian with two packs on. He took a dog trot and Groat kept near him. The feet of the savage often had not left the ground, when those of his captive claimed occupancy of it. The warrior exerted all his strength to outrun his prisoner, who kept constantly "bruising his heel :—" until the former, exhausted and covered with perspira-

\* The Owenagungas settled above *Albany*, on a branch of Hudson's river, that runs towards Canada, about the year 1672.—*Colden's History of the Five Nations*.

tion, fell upon the ground. They had run about a mile and were both greatly fatigued, but Groat had triumphed.

When the Indian had recovered from his exhaustion, he told Groat if he would carry one of the packs, he might travel as he pleased. After this adventure he was kindly treated, and often on the way did his captors give him plenty of food and go hungry themselves, saying that they were Indians and could endure hunger better than himself, because accustomed to it. Nights, his feet were tied to temporary stocks made by bending down saddles, but always secured so high that he could not reach the cord as he lay upon the ground. After journeying a day or two, the prisoner resolved on attempting his escape. One evening when unbound, he hoped to give his captors the slip, but suspecting his motives they cocked their rifles, and not being able to gain even temporary covert of a large tree, he abandoned the hazardous project.

Near Fort Edward, the party fell in with two Mohawk Indians, one of whom, being an old acquaintance, gave the prisoner a hat, of which he had been plundered by his captors. The Mohawks were on a hunting excursion, and remained in company with the party for a day or two, in the hope of affording the prisoner an opportunity to escape. The captors were to be made drunk by liquor in possession of the Mohawks; but as the time for the expedient drew near, Groat fell sick, and had to see his friends depart without him. He, however, gave one of them his tobacco-box, and requested him to carry it to his family, and tell them when and where he had seen its owner, that they might know he was still alive. The Indian did return and deliver the box as requested: but the family were suspicious the Indian had killed him and fabricated the story; which his protracted absence tended to confirm. When he got back, he presented the friendly Indian with a fine horse.

They proceeded some distance by water down Lake Champlain, and on landing at an Indian settlement, Groat had to run the gantlet. His captors had conceived quite an attachment for him, and offered before arriving at the village, to place a belt of wampum around his neck, which, according to the custom of their

tribe, would have entitled him to the same privileges as themselves; and exonerated him from the running ordeal. He thought the acceptance of the belt would be an acknowledgment of his willingness to adopt the Indian life, and refused the offer proffered in kindness, which he regretted when too late. As the lines of women and boys were drawn up through which he was to flee, and he was about to start, his captors, who had relieved him of his pack, buried their faces in their hands, and would not witness his sufferings. He was beaten considerably, and on arriving at the goal of freedom, the blood from some of his bruises ran down to his feet. A short time after, Groat was sold to a French Canadian, named Lewis De Snow, who told him, on going to his house, that *he* was to be his future *master*, and his wife his *mistress*. The former replied that he had long known his master—" *he dwells above,*" he added, pointing his finger upward. At first the Frenchman treated him unkindly. He was willing to work, but would not submit to imposition; and on being severely treated one day, he assured his Canadian master, that sooner than put up with abuse, he would poison him and his wife, and make his escape. Learning his independent spirit, his owner ever after treated him like a brother. The next summer, war was formally declared between Great Britain and France. Groat was claimed as a British prisoner previous to the capture of Quebec, and was for six months imprisoned at *St. Francis'-way*, near Montreal: where he suffered from short allowance of food. He was finally liberated and returned home, after an absence of *four years and four months*, to the surprise and joy of his family, which had considered him as lost forever—was again married, and my informant was a son by his second wife. John L. Groat died in January, 1845, aged about 90 years.

Early in the French war, Eve, the wife of Jacob Van Alstine, who resided in the Mohawk valley, not far from the Groat family, was proceeding along the road on horseback, with a little daughter in her arms; and while in the act of opening a swing-gate which obstructed the road, was fired upon by a party of hostile Indians, and wounded in one arm. The enemy then dispatched

and scalped her, but sparing her child, carried it to Canada. After a long captivity, the child returned,—and now, (1843,) at the age of nearly a century, is still living with her nephew, J. C. Van Alstine, Esq., at Auriesville, Montgomery county.

The following particulars relating to Sir William Johnson and his family, which were mostly derived from Mr. Groat, will, I trust, prove interesting to the reader. Lewis Groat, his father, lived on terms of intimacy with the Baronet, from his first arrival in the Mohawk valley, to the day of his death.

Sir William Johnson was born in Ireland in 1714, and was descended from honorable parentage. His uncle, Admiral Warren, (Sir Peter Warren,) secured a title to some fifteen thousand acres of land, lying mostly within the present town of Florida: not long after which, Sir William became his agent for those lands. Young Johnson had been disappointed in a love affair in his native country, and was possibly sent to America on that account. He arrived in the colony of New York between the years 1735 and 1740, and settled at a place then known as Warren's Bush, a few miles from the present village of Port Jackson. On his arrival, the Mohawk valley was mostly peopled by Indians. Small settlements had, indeed, been made by Germans at Canajoharie, Stone Arabia and the German Flats; and the Dutch were tardily extending their settlements westward of Schenectada; but the white population in the valley was, comparatively speaking, very limited. He at once resolved on a permanent settlement—closely observed the habits and customs of the natives, and being an adept in the study of human nature, soon acquired their confidence and good will.

He had not been long in the valley before he became an agent of the British government, for the Six Indian Nations, possibly through the instrumentality of admiral Warren. Johnson had been only a few years at Warren's Bush, when his friend Lewis Groat, who lived but a short distance from his own residence, asked him in a familiar manner *why he did not get married?* He replied that *he wanted to marry a girl in Ireland—that his parents were opposed to the match, and that since he could not*



*marry the girl of his choice, he had resolved never to marry, but would multiply as much as he could.* It is believed that he faithfully observed this resolution for many years. Near the two canal locks below Port Jackson, some two miles from Johnson's residence, lived at that time, Alexander and Harman Philips, brothers. With those brothers, was living in the capacity of a servant girl, Miss Lana [Eleanor] Wallaslous, unless I am mistaken in her name, of German parentage. She was a native of Madagascar, and on arriving at New York at an early age, was sold into servitude, to pay her passage. She was an uncommonly fair—wholesome looking maid. Groat, knowing his friend's determination not to marry, asked him why he did not *go and get the pretty High Dutch girl at Philips's, for a housekeeper?* He replied, *I will do it!* and they parted.

Not long after this interview, Groat was at Philips's on business, and not seeing her, enquired of one of the brothers where their *High Dutch* girl was? Said Philips, "Johnson, that d—d Irishman came the other day and offered me *five pounds* for her, threatening to *horse-whip me and steal her* if I would not sell her. I thought *five pounds* better than a *flogging*, and took it, and he's got the gal." Johnson obtained the girl in the precise manner he had assured his friend he would proceed. This German girl was the mother of Sir John Johnson, and the wives of Col. Guy Johnson, an Irish relative of Sir William, and Col. Daniel Claus.

Henry Frey Yates, Esq., in a communication to his son, Bernard F., in which he notes several exceptions to sayings of Col. Stone, in the *Life of Brant*, which memoranda have been kindly placed in the hands of the writer by the son since the above was written, quotes from the first volume of that work, page 101, a remark that "the mother of Sir John Johnson was a German lady," and thus discourses:—"Mr. Stone has been misinformed as to the history of the mother of Sir John; she was not a German lady. She was a German by birth." After naming William Harper, a former judge of Montgomery county, and his brother, Alexander, as authority for what he says, he thus continues:—"The facts with respect to the mother of Sir John are, that she

was a poor German girl, who, on her arrival in New York, was sold for her passage over from Germany. That was then the universal practice, and the only method that the poorer class of German emigrants had, when they wanted to emigrate to this country. They were obliged, before they embarked on ship-board for America, to sign articles by which they bound themselves to the captain, that, on their arrival here, they should be sold for their passage money, for one, two, three, or four years, as the captain could make a bargain with the purchaser, the captain being obliged to board them, &c. Whenever a ship arrived, it was immediately advertised that she had brought so many male and female immigrants, who were to be sold for their passage."

They were usually sold into servitude, to such persons as would take them at the shortest period of services, and pay the captain, in advance, his charges for their passage and contingent expenses. Purchasers were bound, on their part, to treat those servants kindly, and release them at the expiration of their time. This custom continued for some twenty-five years after the close of the American Revolution, and numbers who proved valuable citizens, availed themselves of this method of crossing the Atlantic. When passengers were advertised for sale, says Mr. Yates—"The wealthy Germans and Low Dutch, from various parts of the country, would then repair to New York and make their purchases. Sometimes one would purchase for a number of families. In this way it was, that the mother of Sir John was purchased for her passage across the Atlantic by a man named Philips, residing about twelve miles above Schenectada, on the south side of the Mohawk; and nearly opposite Crane's village on the north side of the river. Sir William, seeing the young woman at the house of Mr. Philips, and being pleased with her, bought her of him and took her to his dwelling at the old fort. Sir William had three children by her, Sir John, Mrs. Guy Johnson and Mrs. Col. Claus. Sir William never was married to her, until on her death bed, and then he did it only with a view to legitimize [legitimatised] his children by her. The ceremony was performed by Mr. Barkley, the Episcopal minister residing at Fort Hunter,

where he officiated in a stone church built by Queen Anne for the Mohawk Indians."

At page 387, vol. 1, of Stone's *Brant*, Molly Brant, a sister of that chief, is spoken of as the *wife* of Sir William Johnson. With reference to this woman, says the memoranda of Yates—"It is true that Sir William was married to Molly according to the rites of the Episcopal church, but a few years before his death. The Baronet, feeling his life drawing to a close, and abhorring living longer in adultery, to quiet his conscience, privately married Molly to legitimize his children by her, as he had done those by the German girl, who was the mother of Sir John and his sisters."

Among the few who witnessed the ceremony of the Baronet's second marriage, the memoranda names Robert Adams, a merchant of Johnstown, and Mrs. Rebecca Van Sickler: to the last mentioned he accredits his authority. Mrs. V. S., as the manuscript continues, "was always received into all the respectable families in Johnstown as a welcome guest, and was very fond of relating anecdotes of Sir William. Molly was a very exemplary woman, and was a communicant of the Episcopal church. Among all the old inhabitants on the Mohawk, Molly was respected, as not only reputable, but as an exemplary, pious, christian woman. The care that she took of the education of her children, and the manner in which she brought them up, is at once a demonstration of the depth of the moral sense of duty that she owed her offspring."

As early as the summer of 1746, *Colden*, in his Indian history, speaks of *Mr. William Johnson* (afterwards Sir William Johnson) as "being indefatigable among the Mohawks." "He dressed himself," says that writer, "after the *Indian* manner, made frequent dances according to their custom when they excite to war, and used all the means he could think of, at a considerable expense, (which His Excellency, George Clinton, had promised to repay him,) in order to engage them heartily in the war against *Canada*. [The same writer, noticing the efforts made by Johnson to engage the Mohawk Nation in the British interest against the French, in a war then existing, says that with a part of the Mo-

hawks then residing principally in the vicinity of the Lower Castle, he went to Albany to attend a treaty.] "That when the Indians came near the town of *Albany*, on the 8th of August, Mr. Johnson put himself at the head of the Mohawks, dressed and painted after the manner of an *Indian* war-captain; and the Indians who followed him were likewise dressed and painted as is usual with them when they set out in war. The Indians saluted the Governor as they passed the fort, by a running fire, which his Excellency ordered to be answered by a discharge of some cannon from the Fort. He afterwards received the sachems in the fort-hall, bid them welcome, and treated them with a glass of wine."

Sir William was a military man of some distinction in the colony, and during the French war, held a general's commission. Soon after the signal defeat of Baron Dieskau, in 1755, by the troops under Gen. Johnson, in the northern wilds of New York, the title of *baronet* was conferred upon him, with a gift of parliament to make it set easy, of *five thousand pounds sterling*, nearly twenty thousand dollars—in consideration of his success. His *fortune* was now made, and he was the man to enjoy it. Previously, he erected *Fort Johnson*, a large stone mansion on the north side of the Mohawk, about three miles west of Amsterdam, where he resided for nearly twenty years. This building, which was a noble structure for the middle of the last century, is pleasantly situated near the hill on the west bank of a creek, on which the Baronet built a grist mill. This dwelling, which was finished inside in a then fashionable style, is said to have been fortified from the time of its erection, until the conquest of Canada and termination of the French war.

This place, (now owned by Dr. Oliver Davidson,) is called Fort Johnson to this day. At a latter period he erected dwellings for his sons-in-law, Guy Johnson and Daniel Claus. That occupied by the first named, a large stone dwelling, is still standing one mile above Amsterdam, and was formerly called *Guy Park*. Previous to its erection, he occupied a frame building standing upon the same site, which was struck by lightning and consumed.



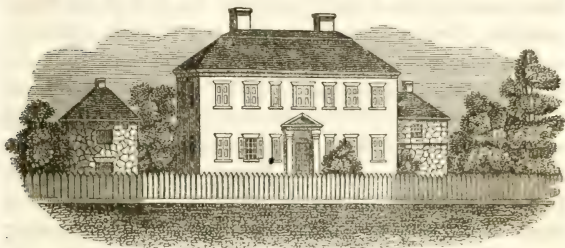


SOUTH VIEW OF FORT JOHNSON.

The mansion of Col. Claus, which was about centrally distant between Fort Johnson and Guy Park, was also constructed of stone, and was large on the ground; but being only one and a half stories high, it presented a less imposing appearance than did the other Johnson buildings. The cellar of the latter house is still to be seen. Each of those dwellings had a farm attached to it of one square mile, or six hundred and forty acres. About ten years before his death, Sir Wm. Johnson erected *Johnson Hall*, a large wood building with detached stone wings, situated one mile west from the village of Johnstown; and on his removal to that place, (at present owned and occupied by Mr. Eleazer Wells,)



Fort Johnson became the residence of his son, who, during a visit to England, had also been gifted by royalty with a title to *his* name; and an annual stipend of *five hundred pounds* for the honors of knighthood. Sir John married a Miss Watts of New York city. He was also on terms of intimacy for several years with Miss Clara Putman of the Mohawk valley, by whom he had several children



EAST VIEW OF JOHNSON HALL.

The following notice of the Baronet is from the September No. (1755) of the London *Gentleman's Magazine*. The article was an extract from a journal written in America.

“Major General Johnson, (an Irish gentleman) is universally esteemed in our parts, for the part he sustains. Besides his skill and experience as an old officer, he is particularly happy in making himself beloved by all sorts of people, and can conform to all companies and conversations. He is very much of the fine gentleman in genteel company. But as the inhabitants next him are mostly Dutch, he sits down with them, and smokes his tobacco, drinks flip, and talks of improvements, bears and beaver skins. Being surrounded with Indians, he speaks several of their languages well, and has always some of them with him. His house is a safe and hospitable retreat for them from the enemy. He takes care of their wives and children when they go out on parties, and even wears their dress. In short, by his honest dealings with them in trade, and his courage, which has often been successfully tried with them, and his courteous behaviour, he has so endeared himself to them, that they chose him one of their chief sachems or princes, and esteem him as their common father.”

Sir William Johnson lived in comparative opulence from the time of his knighthood to the day of his death, which occurred suddenly at Johnson Hall, on the 24th of June, 1774. He died at the age of nearly sixty years. It was supposed by many of his neighbors at that time, that he found means to shorten his days by the use of poison. Col. Stone, in his *Life of Brant*, expresses a different opinion; but several old people still living, who resided at that time, and have ever since, but a few miles from Johnson Hall, believe to this day that he took the suicidal draught. There were certainly some very plausible reasons for such a conclusion. As the cloud of colonial difficulty was spreading from the capital of New England to the frontier English settlements, Sir William Johnson was urged by the British crown to take sides with the parent country. He had been taken from comparative obscurity, and promoted by the government of England, to honors and wealth. Many wealthy and influential friends around him, were already numbered among the advocates of civil liberty. Should he raise his arm against that power which had thus signally honored him? Should he take sides with the oppressor against many of his tried friends in a thousand perilous adventures? These were serious questions, as we may reasonably suppose, which often occupied his mind. The Baronet declared to several of his valued friends, as the storm of civil discord was gathering, that "England and her colonies were approaching a terrible war, but that *he should never live to witness it.*" Such assertions were not only made to Lewis Groat, but also to Daniel Campbell and John Baptist Van Eps, of Schenectada, and to some of them repeatedly. At the time of his death, a court was sitting in Johnstown, and while in the court house on the afternoon of the day of his death, a package from England, of a political nature, was handed him. He left the court house, went directly home, and in a few hours was a corpse. The foregoing particulars are corroborated by the researches of Giles F. Yates Esq. The excitement of the occasion *may* have produced his death without the aid of poison; but as he died thus suddenly, his acquaintances believed he had hastened his death. The three

individuals named, being together after the event, and speaking of the Baronet's death, agreed in their opinion that his former declarations were prophetic, and that he was a man sufficiently determined to execute such design if once conceived. Col. Guy Johnson succeeded Sir William at his death, as the superintendent of Indian affairs for the colony of New York.

In 1775, Guy Johnson abandoned his situation on the Mohawk, and, with Joseph Brant and a formidable number of the Six Nations, went to Canada. Whether Colonel Claus accompanied Guy Johnson or Sir John to Canada, is uncertain; but sure it is, he also left his possessions in the valley and removed thither. Sir John, violating a compact of neutrality made with General Schuyler, set out for Canada in the month of May, 1776, accompanied by about three hundred followers, mostly Scotch settlers in and around Johnstown. After a march of nineteen days through an almost unbroken wilderness, suffering severely for the want of provisions, they reached Montreal. The wife of Guy Johnson died a short time after her removal to Canada.



NORTH VIEW OF GUY PARK.

Guy Park, which was just completed when its owner left it, was occupied during the war by Henry Kennedy; Fort Johnson by Albert Veeder; and the Claus' house by Col. John Harper, until it accidentally took fire from a supposed defect in the chimney, and burned down. A tavern was afterwards erected near

its site, and was for years known as the Simons place. These buildings, and the lands of their owners, with Johnson Hall and the lands belonging to it, were confiscated to the United States; as was also the property of Col. John Butler, one of the King's justices for Tryon county, a man of influence and wealth, who removed at the beginning of the war from the same neighborhood to Canada.

The commissioners appointed March 6th, 1777, for disposing of confiscated personal property in Tryon county, were Col. Frederick Fisher, Col. John Harper, and Maj. John Eisenlord. The latter was, however, killed in the Oriskany battle, early in August following, and his place supplied by one Garrison.

When the personal property of Sir John Johnson was sold, which was some time before the sale of his real estate, his slaves were disposed of among the "goods and chattels." Col. Volkert Veeder bought the confidential one with whom the Knight left his plate and valuable papers, who buried them after his former master left. He kept the concealment of those valuables a secret in his own breast for four years, until Sir John visited the Mohawk valley in 1780, and recovered them and the slave.

The commissioners for selling real estates in Tryon county, were Henry Otthout and Jeremiah Van Rensselaer. They sold Johnson Hall, with seven hundred acres of land, to James Caldwell of Albany, for £6,600—who soon after sold it for £1,400. Caldwell paid the purchase in *public securities*, bought up for a song, and said he made money in the speculation, although he disposed of the property for £5,200 less, "on paper," than he gave for it. This transaction will serve to show the state of American credit at that period—probably in 1778 or '79.

Tradition says that a black ghost appeared several times during the Revolution, in a room in the north-west part of Fort Johnson, while occupied by Veeder. In one of the rooms at Guy Park, a female ghost resembling the then deceased wife of Guy Johnson is said to have appeared, to the great annoyance of the credulous Kennedy family. Even in the day time, they were more than once alarmed. About this time a German, a stranger



to the family, called there, and inquired if the lady of its former proprietor had not been seen; and when answered in the affirmative, he requested permission to tarry over night in the haunted room. It was readily granted, and he retired at an early hour. In the morning before his departure, he told the family they need be under no further apprehension, that the ghost would not again appear; and in truth she did not. The mystery of the visits to those dwellings, which was a favorite theme on the tongue of the marvelous for many years, has never been revealed, and some of the old people living in the vicinity still believe that the visitants were supernatural beings, or real ghosts. The truth probably is, that the black ghost seen at Fort Johnson, was not the *ideal*, but the flesh and blood person of the confidential slave of its former proprietor; who, by showing his ivory to some purpose, took advantage of the fears of the family to bear off some valuable article secreted in some part of the building by its former occupants. Nor is it unlikely that a similar mission prompted some female to visit Guy Park—for ghosts never travel by daylight—that she could not find the article sought for, and that consequently a man, a stranger to the family, whose agent she may have been, knowing she had failed to obtain the treasure, visited the house, and by gaining access to the room, found the object desired, and could then tell the family confidently that the ghost would not reappear. Many valuable articles were left behind by Tories in their flight, who expected soon to return and recover them; and when they found the prospect of their return cut off, or long delayed, they then obtained them by the easiest means possible—and surely none were easier than through the mystery of superstition.

From the great facility of Sir William Johnson to obtain lands, he became a most extensive land-holder. He was remarkably fond of women; and is believed to have been the father of *several scores*—some say an *hundred* children; by far the larger number of whom were part native, some by young squaws, and others by the wives of Indians who thought it an honor to have them on *intimate* terms with the king's agent; and would even bring them a great distance to *prostitute* them to his insatiable



lust. The Five Nations, says *Colden*, carried their hospitality to distinguished strangers so far, as to allow them their choice of a young squaw, from among the prettiest in the neighborhood, (washed clean and dressed in her best apparel) as a companion during his sojourn with them; *who performed all the duties of a fond wife*. Of this custom, which was in vogue when the Baronet settled among them, he availed himself. He had a rich scarlet blanket made, and bound with gold lace, which he wore when transacting business with the Indians, and it being a partial adoption of their own style of wardrobe, it pleased them very much. He often boasted of the pleasurable scenes of which that blanket was the sole witness. He erected buildings at a place called the *Fish House*, on the south bank of the Sacandaga river, some twelve or fifteen miles north-east of Johnstown, where he kept two white concubines, by the name of *Wormwood*. After the death of the mother of Sir John Johnson and his two own sisters, the Baronet took to his bosom Molly Brant, with whom he lived until his death. She was the mother of seven of his children.

Many pleasing anecdotes are related of Sir William Johnson, who perhaps exerted an *unbounded influence* over a *greater number* of Indians, than it was ever the lot of another white man to obtain in North America. His *general character* was rather happily delineated by Paulding in his *Dutchman's Fireside*. When he had trinkets and other presents to distribute among the Five Nations, and they assembled around *Fort Johnson*, and afterwards *Johnson Hall*, his tenants and neighbors were invited to be present. He was extravagantly fond of witnessing athletic feats, and on such occasions was gratified. On those festivals, not only young Indians and squaws, but whites, both male and female, were often seen running *foot races*, or *wrestling* for some gaudy trinket, or fancy article of wearing apparel. Men were sometimes seen running foot races for a prize, with a meal-bag drawn over their legs and tied under the arms. The ludicrous figure presented by the crippled strides and frequent tumbles of those competitors, was a source of no little pleasure. Not unfrequent-

ly a fat swine was the prize of contention. Its tail being well greased, the *whole hog* was given its freedom, and the individual who could seize and hold it by the tail became its lawful owner. It required a powerful gripe to win, and many a hand did such prizes usually slip through. An old woman is said to have seized on one, amid the jeers of the laughing multitude, after it had escaped the grasp of many strong hands, and firmly held it. The secret was, she had prepared herself with a handful of *sand*. On one occasion, half a pound of tea was awarded to the individual who could, by contortion of feature, make the *wryest* face. Two old women were sometimes heard scolding most vehemently, the successful one to be rewarded with a bladder of Scotch snuff. The erection of a straight pole, after it had been peeled and well besmeared with soft-soap, with a prize upon its top worth seeking,—and after which the young Indians, in a state of nudity, would climb, was an oft repeated source of amusement. Children were sometimes seen searching in a mud-puddle for coppers Sir William had thrown in. His ingenuity was taxed for new sources of merriment, and various were the expedients adopted to give zest to the scenes exhibited on those gala days. He was also a man of considerable taste, and discovered not a little in the cultivation of shrubbery around Fort Johnson.

As the Johnsons were extensive land-owners, and preferred leasing to selling land, their disaffection to the American government, and its final confiscation, was a good thing for the country, as it became subsequently occupied by *freeholders*. The confiscated lands of the Johnson family, must have yielded no inconsiderable sum to an impoverished treasury.

The following anecdote is related of Sir William Johnson, who preferred retaining in himself the right of soil to his landed possessions. He one day visited a tenant who was engaged in chopping wood for him. After some little conversation, the chopper described a certain *one hundred acre lot* in Albany bush, (now the eastern part of Johnstown,) and asked the Baronet what he would take for it, and execute him a deed. The latter, supposing the man had very little money, named a sum which was about the

real value of the soil. "*I will take it,*" was the quick and emphatic reply of the laborer ; and he began counting out the money to his astonished landlord, upon the very stump the last fallen tree had left. "I would rather not have sold it for twice that sum," said Sir William, "but since you have fairly bought it, you shall have a title to it ;" and taking the money, he executed a deed to him. He was the patron of many laudable enterprises, and I must suppose him to have aided in establishing Queen's College, N. J., as he was the first trustee named in the charter.

In the summer of 1764, says the *Gentleman's Magazine*, published soon after,

"Sir William Johnson, with a body of regular and provincial forces, to which more than one thousand friendly *Indians* have joined themselves, has lately marched to visit the forts of *Oswego, Niagara, Detroit, Pittsburg, &c.*, in order to strike terror in the Western nations, and to reduce them to reason ; many of these nations are unknown to their brethren, and some have already offered terms of peace ; the *Shawnese* are the most formidable of those who stand out : And the friendly *Indians* express great eagerness to attack them. Since the march of these troops, the back settlements have enjoyed perfect tranquility ; and the *Senecas* have sent in a great number of *English* prisoners, agreeable to their engagement."

In the May number of the same Magazine, for 1765, I find the following additional notice of the Baronet :

"Sir *William Johnson* at his seat at Johnson Hall, in *North America*, has had a visit lately paid him by upwards of a thousand *Indians* of different tribes, all in friendship ; greatly to the satisfaction of his Excellency, as tending to promote a good understanding with those nations, for the good of his Majesty's subjects."

Before his death, Sir William Johnson willed to his children by Miss Brant, the valuable lands known as the *Royal Grant*, which he obtained so easily from the celebrated warrior Hendrick. After death, his remains were placed in a mahogany coffin, and that inclosed in a leaden one, previous to being deposited in a vault beneath the Episcopal Church ; which building was erected in Johnstown about the year 1772. At some period of the Revolution, lead being very scarce, the vault was opened and the leaden coffin taken by the patriots and moulded into bullets. The coffin

containing the body having become somewhat broken, a new one was made after the war closed, and the Baronet's remains transferred to it. The lid of the first coffin, which bore his name in silver nails, was afterward suspended in the church. Not many years ago, the edifice was fitted up at considerable cost, at which time the vault was filled up with sand. In a destructive fire which subsequently visited Johnstown, the church was burned down; and on its being rebuilt, the site was so altered as to leave the grave of Sir William\* outside its walls.—*Alexander J. Comrie.*



### HENDRICK, GREAT CHIEF OF THE MOHAWK NATION.

"The brave old *Hendrick*, the great SACHEM or Chief of the *Mohawk Indians*, one of the Six Nations now in Alliance with, and subject to the King of Great Britain."

\* A portrait of Sir William Johnson was owned in Johnstown until about the year 1830, when it was purchased by a member of the Col. Claus family for a small sum, and taken to Canada.—*Mrs. W. S.*



At the bottom of the picture is the preceding explanation. This celebrated warrior, commonly called King Hendrick, was, for a time, the most distinguished Indian in the colony of New York. For the picture from which the above was engraved, I would here acknowledge my indebtedness to John S. Walsh, Esq., of Bethlehem. This interesting relic of the Mohawk valley, around which cluster associations of classic interest, connected with the *colonial history* of the state, was sold in the revolution among the confiscated property of Sir John Johnson, went into the Cuyler family for a length of time, and subsequently into that of Mr. Walsh. The tradition in the latter family is, that Hendrick visited England in the evening of his life, and that while there was presented, by his Majesty, with a suit of clothes richly embroidered with gold lace, in which he sat for his portrait. As he is represented in full *court dress*, it is highly probable the tradition is correct. The original picture is a spirited engraving—colored to life and executed in London, but at what date is unknown; probably about the year 1745 or '50. He visited Philadelphia some time before his death, says the historian *Dwight*, at which time his likeness was taken; from which a wax figure was made, said to have been a good imitation of his person.

King Hendrick was born about the year 1680, and generally dwelt at the *Upper Castle* of the Mohawk nation, although for a time he resided near the present residence of Nicholas Yost, on the north side of the Mohawk, below the Nose. He was one of the most sagacious and active sachems of his time. He stood high in the confidence of Sir William Johnson, with whom he was engaged in many perilous enterprises against the Canadian French; and under whose command he fell in the battle of Lake George, September 8th, 1755, covered with glory. In the November number of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, for 1755, is the following notice of his death:

“The whole body of our *Indians* were prodigiously exasperated against the *French* and their *Indians*, occasioned by the death of the famous *Hendrick*, a renowned *Indian* warrior among the *Mohawks*, and one of their sachems, or kings, who was slain in the battle, and whose son upon being told that his father was killed,



giving the usual *Indian* groan upon such occasions, and suddenly putting his hand on his left breast, swore his father was still alive in that place, and stood there in his son."

The tract of land owned by Sir William Johnson, and called the Royal Grant, which contained nearly one hundred thousand acres of choice land, now mostly situated in the county of Herkimer, was obtained from Hendrick in the following manner. Being at the Baronet's house (Fort Johnson) the sachem observed a new coat, richly embroidered with gold lace, which the former intended for his own person; and on entering his presence after a night's rest, he said to him, "Brother, me dream last night." "Indeed," responded the royal agent, "and what did my red brother dream?" "Me dream," was the chief's reply, "that this coat be mine!" "Then," said the sagacious Irishman, "it is yours, to which you are welcome." Soon after this interview, Sir William returned his guest's visit, and on meeting him in the morning said to him, "Brother, I dreamed last night!" "What did my pale-faced brother dream?" interrogated the Sachem. "I dreamed," said his guest, "that this tract of land," describing a square bounded on the south by the Mohawk, on the east by Canada creek, and on the north and west by objects familiar to them, "was all my own!" Old Hendrick assumed a thoughtful mood, but although he saw the enormity of the request, he would not be outdone in generosity, or forfeit the friendship of the British agent, and soon responded, "Brother, the land is yours, but you must not dream again!" The title to this land was confirmed by the British government, on which account it was called the Royal Grant.—*Henry Frey Yates, Esq.*

In the summer of 1754, a plan of colonial alliance was proposed in the American colonies, to resist the encroachments of the Canadian French and Indians, in furtherance of which the chiefs of the Six Nations of New York met the commissioners of the several governments at Albany on the 2d of July; when those Sachems were addressed by James De Lancey, then lieutenant governor of the colony. Hendrick, whose speeches are said to have been correctly reported for the London Magazine, in

which I find them, was the principal speaker; and as those speeches will compare for reasoning and pathos with those of modern statesmen, indeed, would not have disgraced a Demosthenes, and will serve to introduce the young reader to an almost extinct race of men, I insert them.

Abraham, Sachem of the Upper Castle of the Mohawks, rose up and said—

“Brethren, You, the governor of *New York*, and the commissioners of the other governments, are you ready to hear us! The governor replied, they were all ready.

“Then *Hendrick*, brother to the said *Abraham*; and a Sachem of the same castle, rose up and spake in behalf of the Six Nations as follows:

“Brethren, just now you told us you were ready to hear us; hearken unto me.

“Brother *Corlaer*, (a name given to the governor of *New York* by the *Indians* long ago,) and brothers of the other governments, Saturday last you told us that you came here by order of the great king our common father, and in his name to renew the antient chain of friendship between this and the other governments on the continent, and us the Six United Nations: And you said also, there were then present commissioners from *Massachusetts Bay*, *New Hampshire*, *Connecticut*, *Rhode Island*, *Pensylvania*, and *Maryland*; and that *Virginia* and *Carolina* desired to be considered also as present: We rejoice that by the king's orders, we are all met here this day, and are glad to see each other face to face; we are very thankful for the same, and we look upon the governors of *South Carolina* and *Virginia* as also present. [a belt.

“Brethren, We thank you in the most hearty manner for your condolence to us; we also condole all your relations and friends who have died since our last meeting here. [gave three

strings of wampum.

“Brethren, (holding the chain belt given by his honor and the several governors in his hand,) We return you all our grateful acknowledgements for renewing and brightening the covenant-chain.

“This belt is of very great importance to our united nations and all our allies. We will therefore take it to Onondago, where our council-fire always burns, and keep it so securely, that neither thunder nor lightning shall break it. There we will consult over it, and as we have lately added two links to it, so we will use our endeavors to add as many links more as it lies in our power: And we hope when we shew you this belt again, we shall give you reason to rejoice at it, by your seeing the vacancies in it filled up (referring to his honor's explanation of it in his general speech). In the mean time we desire that you will strengthen yourselves, and bring as many into this covenant as you possibly can. We

do now solemnly renew and brighten the covenant-chain with our brethren here present, and with all our other absent brethren on the continent.

“Brethren, As to the accounts you have heard of our living divided from each other, it is very true, we have several times attempted to draw off those of our brethren who are settled at *Oswegatie*, but in vain; for the governor of *Canada* is like a wicked deluding spirit; however, as you desire, we shall persist in our endeavors.

“You have asked us the reason of our living in this divided manner; the reason is, your neglecting us these three years past; (then taking a stick and throwing it behind his back) You have thus thrown us behind your backs, and disregarded us; whereas, the *French* are subtle and vigilant people, ever using their utmost endeavors to seduce and bring our people over to them. [a belt.

“Brethren, The encroachments of the *French*, and what you have said to us on that article on behalf of the king our father; as these matters were laid before us as of great importance, so we have made strict enquiry among all our people, if any of them have either sold or given the *French* leave to build the forts you mention, and we cannot find that either sale has been made or leave has been given; but the *French* have gone thither without our consent or approbation, nor ever mentioned it to us.

“Brethren, The governor of *Virginia* and the governor of *Canada* are both quarrelling about lands which belong to us, and such a quarrel as this may end in our destruction. They fight who shall have the land; the governors of *Virginia* and *Pennsylvania* have made paths through our country to trade, and built houses without acquainting us with it; They should have first asked our consent to build there, as was done when *Oswego* was built. [gave a belt.

“Brethren, It is very true, as you told us, that the clouds hang heavy over us, and it is not very pleasant to look up, but we give you this belt [giving a belt] to clear away all clouds, that we may all live in bright sunshine, and keep together in strict union and friendship; then we shall become strong, and nothing can hurt us.

“Brethren, This is the antient place of treaty where the fire of friendship always used to burn, and it is now three years since we have been called to any public treaty here; 'tis true, there are commissioners here, but they have never invited us to smoke with them (by which they mean, the commissioners had never invited them to any conference), but the *Indians of Canada* came frequently and smoked with them, which is for the sake of their beaver, but we hate them (meaning the *French* Indians): We have not as yet confirmed the peace with them: 'tis your fault, brethren, we are not strengthened by conquest, for we should have gone and taken *Crown Point*, but you hindered us: We had concluded to go and take it; but we were told it was too late, and

that the ice would not bear us. Instead of this you burnt your own fort at *Saraghtogee* and run away from it; which was a shame and a scandal to you. Look about your country, and see you have no fortifications about you, no, not even to this city. 'Tis but one step from *Canada* hither, and the *French* may easily come and turn you out of doors.

"Brethren, You desired us to speak from the bottom of our hearts, and we shall do it. Look about you, and see all these houses full of beaver, and the money is all gone to *Canada*; likewise your powder, lead, and guns, which the *French* make use of at the *Ohio*.

"Brethren, You were desirous we should open our minds and our hearts to you; look at the *French*, they are men; they are fortifying every where, but we are ashamed to say it; you are like women, bare and open, without any fortifications."

At the close of the above speech, Abraham, a brother of Hendrick, rose up and said :

"Brethren, We should let you know what was our desire three years ago, when Col. *Johnson* [he was promoted to Major General in 1754] laid down the management of *Indian* affairs, which gave us great uneasiness; the governor then told us, (governor of New York) it was in his power to continue him, but that he would consult the council of New York; that he was going over to *England*, and promised to recommend our desire, that Col. *Johnson* should have the management of *Indian* affairs, to the king, that the new governor might have power to reinstate him. We long waited in expectation of this being done, but hearing no more of it, we embrace this opportunity of laying this belt [and gave a belt] before all our brethren here present, and desire that Col. *Johnson* may be reinstated and have the management of *Indian* affairs; for we all lived happy whilst under his management; for we love him, and he us; and he has always been our good and trusty friend.

"Brethren, I forgot something; we think our request about Col. *Johnson*, which governor *Clinton* promised to carry to the king our father, is drowned in the sea; the fire here is burnt out; and turning his face to the New York commissioners for *Indian* affairs in *Albany* there present, desired them to notice what he said."

On the same day, *Hendrick*, in the name of the *Mohawks of the Upper Castle (Connejoahary)* in a private audience, delivered the following speech—in the presence of several sachems of each of the other nations, to the governor of New York :

"Brother, We had a message some time since to meet you at his place when the fire burns; we of *Connejoahary*, met the messenger you sent with a letter at Col. *Johnson's*; and as soon as we received it we came running down, and the Six Nations are now here complete."



The Governor replied—

“Brethren of the Six Nations, you are welcome. I take this opportunity, now you are all together, to condole the loss in the death of your friends and relations since you last met here; and with this string of wampum I wipe away your tears, and take sorrow from your hearts, that you may open your minds and speak freely.”  
[a string of wampum.]

Hendrick continued—

“Brother, We thank you for condoling our loss; for wiping away our tears that we may speak freely; and as we do not doubt but you have lost some of your great men and friends, we give you this string of condolence in return, that it may remove your sorrows, that we may both speak freely: [gave a string.] (Then *Hendrick*, addressing himself to the Six Nations, said,) “That last year he attended Col. *Johnson* to *Onondago* to do service to the king and their people; that Col. *Johnson* told them, another governor was expected soon, and they would then have an opportunity of seeing him, and laying their grievances before him.—That the new governor arrived soon after, and scarcely had they heard of his arrival, but they had an account of his death: and that now he was glad to see his honor, to whom he would declare his grievances.

“Brother, We thought you would wonder why we of *Connejo-hary* staid so long; we shall now give you the reason. Last summer we of *Connejo-hary* were at *New York* to make our complaint, and we thought then the covenant chain was broken, because we were neglected; and when you neglect business, the *French* take advantage of it; for they are never quiet.—It seemed so to us, that the governor had turned his back upon the Five Nations, as if they were no more; whereas the *French* are doing all in their power to draw us over to them. We told the governor last summer, we blamed him for the neglect of the Five Nations; and at the same time we told him the *French* were drawing the Five Nations away to *Oswegechie*, owing to that neglect which might have been prevented, if proper use had been made of that warning; but now we are afraid it is too late. We remember how it was in former times, when we were a strong and powerful people: Col. *Schuyler* used frequently to come among us, and by this means we kept together.

“Brother, We, the *Mohawks*, are in very difficult circumstances, and are blamed for things behind our backs which we do not deserve. Last summer, when we went up with Col. *Johnson* to *Onondago*, and he made his speech to the Five Nations, the Five Nations said they liked the speech, but that the *Mohawks* had made it. We are looked upon by the other nations as Col. *Johnson*’s counsellors, and supposed to hear all the news from him, which is not the case; for Col. *Johnson* does not receive from, or impart much news to us. This is our reason for staying behind, for if we had come first, the other nations would have said that we made the



Governor's speech; and therefore, though we were resolved to come, we intended the other nations should be before us, that they might hear the Governor's speech, which we could hear afterwards.

"There are some of our people who have large open ears, and talk a little broken *English* and *Dutch*, so that they hear what is said by the Christian settlers near them, and by this means we come to understand that we are looked upon to be a proud nation, and therefore stayed behind. 'Tis true and known we are so; and that we, the *Mohawks*, are the head of all the other nations. Here they are, and must own it. But it was not out of pride we *Connehoharies* stayed behind; but for the reason we have already given."

A speaker followed *Hendrick*, in behalf of all the Six Nations. After expressing his joy at the renewal of *the ancient covenant-chain* between all his Majesty's governments on the continent and the Six Nations; for the promises on the part of the New York Governor of future protection; and the danger he thought they would be in, if *Col. Johnson* left off the management of Indian affairs,—observing, *if he fail us, we die*,—he alluded to what the Governor of Pennsylvania, through Mr. Weiser, his interpreter, had said on the day before, respecting a new road from *Pennsylvania* to *Ohio*. "We thank the Governor of *Virginia*," said he, "for assisting the *Indians* at the *Ohio*, who are our relations and allies; and we approve of the Governor of *Pennsylvania* not having hitherto intermeddled in this affair. He is a wise and prudent man, and will know his own time." He closed as follows:—

"Brethren, We put you in mind in our former speech of the defenceless state of our frontiers, particularly of the country of *Chenectady*, and of the country of the Five Nations. You told us yesterday you were consulting about securing both yourselves and us. We beg you will contrive something speedily: you are not safe from danger one day. The *French* have their hatchet in their hands both at the *Ohio* and in two places in *New England*. We don't know but this very night they may attack us. One of the principal reasons why we desire you to be speedy in this matter is, that since *Col. Johnson* has been in this city, there has been a *French Indian* at his house, who took measure of the wall round it, and made a very narrow observation of every thing thereabouts. We think him (*Col. Johnson*) in very great danger, because the *French* will take more than ordinary pains either to kill him or take him a prisoner, upon account of his great interest among us, being also one of the Five Nation." (*Col. Johnson* is one of their Sachems.)

[Gave four strings of wampum.

The Governor replied—

“I have now done speaking to you; but before I cover up the fire I must recommend to you to behave quietly and peaceably to all your brethren and their cattle, in your return home.”

Hendrick responded—

“Your honor told us you now covered up the fires, and we are all highly pleased that all things have been so amicably settled; and hope that all that has passed between us may be strictly observed on both sides.

“Brethren of the several governments, We hope that you will not fail in the covenant-chain, wherewith we are mutually bound, and have now so solemnly renewed and strengthened; if we do not hold fast by this chain of friendship our enemies will laugh us to scorn.

“Brethren, We wish you would all contribute to make some provision for us in our return home, which will effectually prevent our people from killing the inhabitants’ cattle; and we desire you will provide some wagons for us to go to *Chenectady*. We think this expense will fall too heavy upon our province, as we have the presents from all to carry up. We beg we may take all care of the fire of friendship, and preserve it, by our mutual attention, from further injuries. We will take care of it on our sides, and hope our brethren will do so on theirs. We wish the tree of friendship may grow up to a great height, and then we shall be a powerful people.

“We, the United Six Nations, shall rejoice in the increase of our strength, so that all other nations may stand in awe of us.

“Brethren, I will just tell you what a people we were formerly. If any enemies rose against us, we had no occasion to lift our whole hand against them, for our little finger was sufficient; and as we have now made so strong a confederacy, if we are truly earnest therein, we may retrieve the ancient glory of the Five Nations.

“Brethren, We have now done. But one word more must we add: If the *French* continue their hostilities, the interpreter will want assistance—three or four to be joined with him; but this matter we submit to the Governor. We have now fully finished all we have to say.”

The following speech, delivered at the same convention by one of the River or Stockbridge Indians, is too full of figure and melancholy truth to be omitted in this place :

“Fathers, We are greatly rejoiced to see you all here; it is by the will of Heaven that we are met here, and we thank you for this opportunity of seeing you all together, as it is a long while since we had such a one.

"Fathers, who are here present, We will give you a short relation of the long friendship which has subsisted between the white people of this country and us. Our forefathers had a castle on the river: as one of them walked out he saw something on the river, but was at a loss to know what it was; he took it at first for a great fish; he run into the castle and gave notice to the other *Indians*; two of our forefathers went to see what it was, and found it a vessel with men in it; they immediately joined hands with the people in the vessel, and became friends. The white people told them they should not come up the river any further at that time, and said to them they would return back from whence they came, and come again in a year's time, and come as far up the river as where the old fort stood. Our fathers invited them ashore, and said to them "Here we will give you a place to make you a town; it shall be from this place up to such a stream, (meaning where the petteroon mill now stands,) and from the river back up to the hill. Our forefathers told them, though they were now a small people, they would in time multiply, and fill up the land they had given them. After they were ashore some time, some other *Indians*, who had not seen them before, looked fiercely at them; and our forefathers observing it, and seeing the white people so few in number, lest they should be destroyed, took and sheltered them under their arms; but it turned out that those *Indians* did not desire to destroy them, but wished also to have the same white people for their friends. At this time which we have now spoken of, the white people were small, but we were very numerous and strong; we defended them in that low state: But now the case is altered; you are numerous and strong, but we are few and weak; therefore we expect that you will act by us in these circumstances, as we did by you in those we have just now related. We view you now as a very large tree, which has taken deep root in the ground, whose branches are spread very wide. We stand by the body of the tree, and we look round to see if there be any one who endeavors to hurt it, and if it should so happen, that any are powerful enough to destroy it, we are ready to fall with it.

[gave a belt.

"Fathers, you see how early we made friendship with you; we tied each other in a strong chain: That chain has not yet been broken: We now clean and rub that chain to make it brighter and stronger; and we determine on our parts that it shall never be broken; and we hope that you will take care, that neither you nor any one else shall break it; and we are greatly rejoiced, that peace and friendship have so long subsisted between us."—*Gentlemen's Magazine*.

The three Castles of the Mohawk Nation, says *Colden*, were all surprised and captured by a party of six or seven hundred French and Indians, on the 8th of March, 1693. The *Lower*

*Castle* was bravely defended by the few warriors who chanced to be in it, until they were overpowered by numbers.

In the reign of Queen Anne of England, and about the year 1710, a frontier military post was established at the junction of the Schoharie and Mohawk rivers, on the east bank of the former, and near the eastern Mohawk Castle. Captain John Scott, an English officer, erected a small fort of hewn timber at this place, and called it Fort Hunter, in honor of Robert Hunter, then governor of the colony; which fort was intended to protect the natives against the hostile French, and secure their trade. About the same time a small church was built near the fort, and called *Queen Anne's Chapel*. It was erected by the Queen, whose munificence endowed it, says *Colden*, "with furniture, and a valuable set of plate for the communion table." It was a substantial stone edifice, somewhat resembling in appearance the one afterwards erected at Caughnawaga, and was for a great length of time under the management of an Episcopal Society in England, *for propagating the gospel in foreign parts*, which society supported a minister at this place as a missionary among the Mohawk Indians. The entrance to the chapel was on its north side near the centre. The pulpit, which was provided with a sounding board, stood at the west end, and directly opposite were two pews finished for the occupancy of Sir William Johnson and the minister's family; the floor of which was elevated. Johnson's pew was also furnished with a wooden canopy. Moveable benches served the rest of the congregation with seats.

Fort Hunter was a place of no little importance in the early history of the Mohawk valley; and at that post were doubtless planned some important enterprises against the Canadas. Speaking of the Indian "war dances," *Colden* says:

"An officer of the regular troops told me, that while he was commandant of *Fort Hunter*, the *Mohawks* on one of these occasions, (that of a war dance,) told him, that they (the Indians) expected the usual military honors as they passed the garrison. The men presented their pieces as the *Indians* passed, and the drum beat a march; and with less respect, the officer said, they would have been dissatisfied. The *Indians* passed in single row one af-



ter another, with great gravity and profound silence ; and every one of them, as he passed the officer, took his gun from his shoulder, and fired into the ground near the officer's foot : They marched in this manner three or four miles from their Castle. The women on these occasions follow them with their old clothes, and they send back by them their *finery* in which they marched from the Castle."

The ruins of old Fort Hunter were torn down at the beginning of the Revolution, and the chapel enclosed by heavy palisades. In the corners of the yard were small block houses mounting cannon. This place, which continued to be called Fort Hunter, was garrisoned in the latter part of the war, and Capt. Tremper, from below Albany, was its commandant. The chapel was torn down about the year 1820, to make room for the Erie canal.



QUEEN ANNE'S CHAPEL PARSONAGE.

Queen Anne's chapel was early provided with a small bell, which is now in use on the Academy in Johnstown. A glebe or farm of three hundred acres of good land was attached to it, which was conveyed at some period by the natives to Dr. Barclay, and by him to the society alluded to, *on their reimbursing*



*him moneys expended upon it.* The parsonage house, said to have been built about the time the chapel was, is still standing in Florida, half a mile below the Schoharie, and a few rods south of the canal, from which it is visible. It is a stone building, some twenty-five by thirty-five feet on the ground, two stories high, with a quadrangular roof, presents a very ancient appearance, and is possibly the oldest house west of Schenectada in the Mohawk valley. The chapel farm was disposed of some years ago, and part of the proceeds, nearly fifteen hundred dollars, were laid out in erecting the Episcopal Church at Port Jackson, in the same town; and the residue, an equal sum, invested in the Episcopal Church of Johnstown.—*Spafford's Gazetteer, Peter Putman, J. L. Groat, A. J. Comrie, and others.*

The chapel parsonage at Fort Hunter, is now owned and occupied by Nicholas Reese. The last occupant under the patronage of the Missionary Society, was the Rev. John Stuart, who was officiating there at the beginning of the revolution. He removed, with the Indians under his charge, to Canada—they choosing to follow the fortunes of the Johnsons and Butlers. I have in my possession a bill of sale from Mr. Stuart to John Conyn, who returned to the Mohawk after the revolution, of a male slave called Tom Doe, who went from Fort Hunter with his master to Canada. The sale was for \$275 in specie, and was dated at Montreal, November 19, 1783. At the close of the war, Mr. Stuart settled on Grand river, and resumed his ministerial labors.

In 1720, Captain Scott took a patent for the lands extending from Aurie's creek to the Yates and Fonda line, near the present village of Fultonville. Aurie is the Dutch of Aaron, and the creek was so called after an old Indian warrior named Aaron, who lived many years in a hut which stood on the flats now owned by J. C. Yost, on the east side of the creek. The adjoining village was named after the stream.

Early in the eighteenth century, three brothers named Quackenboss emigrated from Holland to the colony of New York; one of them locating at New York city, and the other two at Albany. Peter, one of the latter, settled on Scott's patent, only two or

three years after it was secured. He resided near Aurie's creek at the now Leslie Voorhees' place. Mr. Quackenboss had several children grown up when he arrived in the country, and David, his elder son, after a somewhat romantic courtship, married Miss Ann, a daughter of Captain Scott, and settled on *Scott's Patent*, where the Montgomery county poor house now stands. A young officer under the command of Captain Scott, requested young Quackenboss, then in the employ of the captain, to speak a good word for him to Miss Ann, which he readily promised to do. While extolling the good qualities of her admirer, he took occasion to suggest his partiality for herself. The maiden, who had conceived an attachment for Quackenboss instead of the young subaltern, shrewdly asked him why he did not make advances *on his own account*. He had not presumed on so advantageous a match; but the hint was sufficient to secure his fortune and happiness. His son John, a fruit of this connection, born about the year 1725, was the first white child born on the south side of the Mohawk—west of Fort Hunter, and east of the German settlements some distance above. Captain Scott had one son who became a general officer.—*John Scott Quackenboss*.

About the year 1740, a small colony consisting of sixteen families of Irish immigrants was planted, under the patronage of Wm. Johnson, afterwards baronet, on lands now owned by Henry Shelp, a few miles south-west of Fort Hunter, in the present town of Glen. Several years after they had built themselves rude dwellings, cleared lands, planted orchards, and commenced their agricultural labors, a disturbance arose between the Indian Confederacy of New York and the Canadian Indians, which the colonists conceived endangered their domestic tranquility; in consequence of which the settlement was broken up, and the chicken-hearted pioneers, then numbering eighteen or twenty families, returned to the Emerald Isle. Traces of their residence are visible at the present day.—*John Hughes and Peter Putman*.

The first merchant in the Mohawk valley west of Schenectada, was Maj. Jelles (Giles) Fonda, a son of Douw Fonda, an early settler at Caughnawaga. For many years he carried on an ex-

tensive business for the times, at the latter place—trading with the white citizens of the valley, and the natives of western New York; the latter trade being carried on at old Fort Schuyler, now Utica; Fort Stanwix, (called in the revolution Fort Schuyler,) now Rome, and Forts Oswego, Niagara and Schlosser. An abstract from his ledger shows an indebtedness of his customers at one time just before the revolution, amounting to over *ten thousand dollars*. Many of his goods he imported directly from London. To his Indian customers he sold blankets, trinkets, ammunition and rum; and received in return, peltries and ginseng root. The latter was at that time an important item among the exports of what was *then*, Western New York; and the two named added to the article of pot-ash, almost the only commodities purchased in a foreign market.

The following anecdote is believed to be true. In the employ of Sir William Johnson a few years before his death, was an Irishman named McCarthy, by reputation the most noted pugilist in Western New York. The baronet offered to pit his fellow countryman against any man who could be produced for a fist fight. Major Fonda, tired of hearing the challenge, and learning that a very muscular Dutchman named John Van Loan, was living near Brakabeen, in the Schcharie valley, made a journey of some forty or fifty miles, to secure his *professional services*, for he, too, was reputed a bully. Van Loan readily agreed to flog the son of Erin, for a ten pound note. At a time appointed, numbers were assembled at Caughnawaga to witness the contest between the pugilists. After McCarthy had been swaggering about in the crowd for a while, and greatly excited public expectation by his boasting, inducing numbers to bet on his head, his competitor appeared ready for the contest—clad for the occasion in a shirt and breeches of dressed deer-skin fitted tight to his person. A ring was formed and the battle commenced. The bully did his best, but it was soon evident that he was not a match for his Dutch adversary, who slipped through his fingers like an eel, and parried his blows with the greatest ease. Completely exhausted and almost bruised to a jelly, Sir William's gamester was

removed, looking if not expressing—*peccavi*.—*Abraham A. Van Horne*, who obtained the facts from a son of Van Loan.

I have spoken in the preceding chapter, of the custom of providing refreshments at funerals; a practice which continued in vogue in some degree for at least one hundred years, and until about the year 1825. Smoking was an attendant on the prevailing habit, as the following order from Col. D<sup>r</sup>. Claus, will show.

"SIR—I have sent the bearer for four dozen of Pipes and a few pounds of Tobacco, for the burial of Mr. Raworth's child wh please to charge to me.

"Monday, 27th Aug., 1770.

D. CLAUS."

"To Maj'r Jelles Fonda."

The trade with the Indians along the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence, was carried on by the aid of boats propelled from Schenectada up the Mohawk at great personal labor, in consequence of their being several rifts or rapids in the stream. The first obstruction of the kind was met with six miles above Schenectada, and was called *Six Flats' rift*; proceeding west came in course similar obstructions known as *Fort Hunter rift*; *Caughnawaga rift*; *Keator's rift*, at Spraker's, the greatest on the river, having a fall of ten feet; *Brandywine rift*, at Canajoharie, short but rapid; *Ehle's rift* near Fort Plain; *Kneiskern's rift*, a small rapid near the upper Indian castle, a little above the river dam; and the *Little falls\**, so called as compared with the Cahoes on the same stream near its mouth. At the Little Falls, a descent in the river of forty feet in half a mile, boats could not be forced up the current, and it became a carrying place for them and merchandise, which were transported around the rapids on wagons with small wide rimmed wheels, the water craft re-

\* The village of Little Falls, so romantically situated on the Mohawk, already has a population numbering some three thousand inhabitants, and is rapidly increasing. It seems destined to become the largest place between Albany and Utica in the Mohawk valley. A manufactory for woolen goods has recently been erected here, and an academy, a large stone edifice, constructed of masive granite from the vicinity, recently completed, was opened in November, 1844, with a male and female department; the former under the charge of Merri<sup>t</sup> G. McKoon, A. M., and the latter under the superintendence of Miss Amanda Hodgeman, a young lady of real merit.

launched and and re-loaded to proceed onward. On such occasions one of the party usually staid with the goods deposited above, while the team returned for the boat. Small batteaus, known in early times as three-handed and four-handed boats, were in use on the Mohawk, which carried from two to five tons each; and so called because three or four men were required to propel them. There boats were forced over the rapids in the river with poles and ropes, the latter drawn by men on the shore. Such was the mode of transporting merchandize and Indian commodities to and from the west, for a period of about fifty years, and until after the Revolution. A second carrying place in use at an early day was near Fort Stanwix, from the boatable waters of the Mohawk to Wood creek. Passing into Oneida lake, the batteaus proceeded into the Oswego river, and from thence to Oswego on lake Ontario. From Oswego to Niagara, a place of much importance, merchandize was transported in the same boats or on sloops. Major Fonda, as his papers show, had much to do with the navigation of the river in the French and American wars with England.—*Joseph Spraker.*

After the Revolution, the tide of emigration was "Westward Ho!" and a corporate body, known as the "Inland Lock Navigation Company," constructed a *dam* and *sluice* to facilitate business at Wood creek, and built several locks at Little Falls, so that boats might pass and repass without unloading. These locks were constructed under the supervision and direction of Gen. Philip Schuyler, whose memory, for services rendered his country in her most trying period, will ever be held in grateful remembrance by the citizens of New York. The locks at Little Falls were completed in 1795. The following original paper, given by Gen. Schuyler to a namesake, and son of the Rev. Mr. Schuyler, of Schoharie, will show at what time the business was most actively prosecuted.

TO MR. PHILIP SCHUYLER :

"By virtue of the powers vested in me by the directors of the Inland Lock Navigation Companies in this state, I do hereby appoint you an Assistant Superintendent, to superintend, direct and



command the mechanics and labourers, and their respective overseers, already employed in the service of the said companies, hereby requiring the said overseers, and others so employed, in all things to pay due obedience to all your lawful requisitions and directions.

"Given under my hand, in the county of Herkimer, this eighth day of May, 1793.

"PH: SCHUYLER,

*"President and Superintendent."*

In June following, Gen. S. gave his namesake the annexed very flattering testimonial, which shows the usual caution of that great man in guarding against accidents :

*Falls, June 22, 1793.*

"DEAR SIR :—I experience so much satisfaction from your attention, and the readiness with which you comprehend the hints given by me for the construction of the works, that I consider it as a duty to give you this written testimony of my perfect satisfaction of your conduct, and to evince my sense of it by a pecuniary reward. Your compensation, from the original time of agreement, will be two dollars per day ; this, however, I do not wish you to mention, least others should conceive that I made a discrimination unfavorable to them, although in reality I do not, for their services are by no means as important to the Lock Navigation Company as yours.

"Least an accident should happen to me, which might deprive you of the benefit of the above mentioned allowance, you will keep this letter as a testimony thereof.

"I am, Dear Sir,

"Your friend and humble servant,

"PH: SCHUYLER,

*"President of the Board of Directors."*

"To Mr. PHILIP SCHUYLER."

After the locks were built at Little Falls, business on the river greatly increased, and apples and cider were then among the commodities sent west. The clumsy batteau, which had for half a century usurped the place of the Indian's bark canoe,—the little craft which had danced on the bosom of the Mohawks' river for many ages,—soon gave place to the *Durham boat*, carrying from ten to fifteen tons, and constructed, in shape, not unlike a modern canal boat. Few of them were decked over, except at the ends, but all were along the sides, where cleets were nailed down to give foothold to boatmen using poles. Boating, at this period was attended with great personal labor : the delay of unloading at Lit-

the Falls had been obviated, but it was found more difficult to force large than small craft over the rapids. Several boats usually went in company, and if any arrived first at a rift, they awaited the approach of others, that the united strength of many men might aid in the labor before them. Those boats were often half a day in proceeding only a few rods, and not unfrequently were they, after remaining nearly stationary on a rapid for an hour, when the strength of numbers was united with poles and ropes in propelling, compelled to drop below the rift and get a new start. Twenty hands, at times, were insufficient to propel a single boat over Keator's rift. When boat's crews were waiting at a rapid for the arrival of their fellows, they usually did their cooking on shore. Poles used on those boats had heads, which rested against the shoulder, which was often calloused or galled, like that of a collar-worn horse. Black slaves, owned by settlers in the neighborhood of rapids, both male and female, were often seen assisting at the ropes on shore, when loaded boats were ascending the river.

Accidents sometimes occurred to boatmen, though seldom attended with loss of life. A three-handed boat once struck a rock in Keator's rift, upset, and a negro was drowned. At Fort Hunter rift, a three handed boat upset, when Wm. Hull and Kennedy Failing were drowned,—the third person in the boat, a son of Abraham Otthout, of Schenectada, swam ashore. One of the last accidents of the kind on the river, occurred while the Erie Canal was building, to a Durham boat, one of the best of that class of river craft, called the Butterfly. It was descending the river, then swollen, laden with flour, when it became unmanageable, swung round, and struck its broadside against a pier of the Canajoharie bridge, and broke near the centre. The contents of the boat literally filled the river for some distance, and a hand on the boat was drowned. His name was afterwards ascertained to be John Clark. His body was recovered twelve miles below, and was buried on the river bank, in the present village of Fultonville. His bones having been disclosed by the spring freshet of 1845, they were taken up and buried in the village burying-

ground. The owner of the boat, a Mr. Myers, had its fragments taken to Schenectada and rebuilt, after which it entered the canal, (the eastern sections being completed,) and from thence he transported it into Cayuga lake. While there engaged, his boat sunk laden with gypsum, and he was drowned. Thus ended the *Butterfly* and its owner. Boats managed by skilful hands sometimes sailed down the rapids at Little Falls when the river was high, but it was always attended with danger. Several row-boats, constructed expressly to carry some twenty passengers each, from Utica to Schenectada, and tastefully curtained, were in use on the Mohawk some forty years ago. They were called river packets.—*Myndert Starin.*

The first bridge of any importance in the Mohawk valley, was built by Maj. Isaiah Depuy, a resident of Glen at the time of his death (1841), and was erected across the Schoharie at Fort Hunter. It was commenced in October, 1796, and on the 4th day of July following, the anniversary of *Liberty* was celebrated upon it. The next bridge worthy of note in the valley, was an elliptic or arched one over the Mohawk at Schenectada. It was begun in 1797, and when nearly completed, the winter following, was upset by the wind, taken down, and rebuilt on piers. While this bridge was building, an incident of no little interest occurred. After the string pieces had been laid, and before they were planked, a young son of the contractor walked unobserved over the middle of the stream. A workman discovering the urchin upon the timbers, directed the attention of the father that way. With feelings of deepest anxiety he beheld his darling boy in a position from which a misstep would inevitably launch him into eternity. Prudence dictated silence, and after the little fellow had surveyed the premises to his satisfaction, he returned to the shore, to the great relief of his agitated parent, who gave him a good basting for his motherly curiosity.

A bridge was begun at Canajoharie before the Schenectada bridge was completed. This was also an elliptic, and required to be taken down at the end of a year or two, when it was placed on three piers. Some years previous to the erection of this bridge,

a ferry was established at Canajoharie, and owned by the Messrs. Roseboom, who traded where the ferry was located, one mile east of the village. At an early period, a good bridge was built over the east Canada creek, which afforded a pattern for one constructed at Caughnawaga—where, for many years, there had also been a ferry. The last mentioned bridge was put up in the summer and completed by the following winter, so as to be used on one track, but the first spring freshet carried it off. Afterwards, the Mohawk Turnpike Company erected another, some thirty rods farther up the river, which is still standing. A bridge was stretched across the river many years ago, a little below the Nose, but it was soon after swept away by the ice and never rebuilt. Bridges have also been erected over the Mohawk at Cahoes Falls, Amsterdam, Fort Plain, Little Falls, Herkimer and Utica.

Archibald and James Kane, brothers, established themselves in the mercantile business on the Mohawk about the year 1795; locating between the Rosebooms and the present village of Canajoharie, where one of their buildings, having an arched roof, is still to be seen. The Kanes were, for a time, the heaviest dealers west of Albany. At this period there was much gambling and horse-racing in the Mohawk valley. Indeed, there continued to be until about the year 1825. *Intemperance*, the parent of many vices and miseries, was an attendant, and to such an extent did it stalk abroad for thirty or forty years, that numerous churches were seriously affected by it, their ministers often setting the example, then prevalent in New York and New England, not only of placing the *beaded liquid* before friends, but of drinking with them at taverns. On a certain occasion in 1797 or '98, when a party were playing cards (a game of *lieu*) at Canajoharie, with stakes upon the table amounting to some five hundred dollars, Archibald Kane became indebted to Barney Roseboom for nearly one hundred dollars, and another of the gamblers becoming the debtor of Kane for about the same sum, a difficulty originated in trying to reconcile the liability of the parties to each other, and Kane gave Roseboom a challenge to personal combat. It was supposed that the challenge would not have been given, had the

challenger believed his antagonist would have accepted it, the latter having a lovely wife and several interesting children; but it was accepted, ground paced off, and shots exchanged with a brace of trooper's pistols. Kane was wounded in his left arm, and with the wound his bruised honor was healed; the combatants became as warm personal friends as ever, and thus ended an affair which created no little excitement for a time, in Western New York. A few years after the transaction above related, Archibald Kane went to Hayti, married into the family of the governing nobility, and died there.

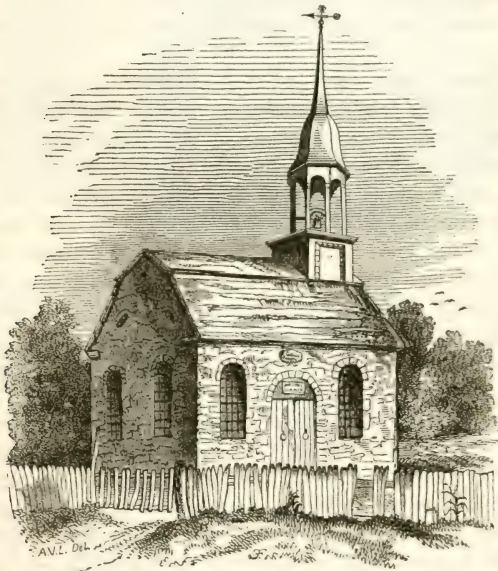
A pleasing story was originated when the Kanes were trading at Canajoharie, about an imposition practised by a shrewd Yankee, upon an honest Dutch justice of Herkimer county, who had arrested him for journeying on the Sabbath. According to the story, the Yankee was stopped, but as his business was urgent, the man of equity agreed to give him a written permit to proceed for a nominal sum. The justice, requesting the traveler to write it, is said to have set his hand unconsciously to an order on the Messrs. Kane for some fifty dollars, instead of a permit to travel; which, when presented for payment, he pronounced the *tam Yankee pass*: but James Kane, who now resides in Albany, pronounces the whole narrative a hoax.

The Caughnawaga church, a land mark of former days, is a stone edifice, and was erected in 1763, by voluntary contributions. Sir William Johnson gave liberally towards building it. The steeple was placed on it in 1795. Of this church and congregation, the Rev. Thomas Romeyn was the first pastor. He died, and was succeeded in June, 1795, by the Rev. Abraham Van Horn, one of the earliest graduates of Queen's College, New Jersey. Mr. V. H. was settled in Ulster county five years previous to taking charge of the congregation at Caughnawaga, and married, during his whole ministry, about *fifteen hundred* couple—more, perhaps, than any clergyman now living in the United States. He died suddenly at an advanced age, January 5, 1840.

This church was without a bell until the confiscated property



of Sir John Johnson was sold in the revolution, when the former *dinner-bell* of his father, Sir William, was purchased by several male members, conveyed to it on a pole by friendly Indians, and placed upon it. On the bell is the following inscription—"S R William Johnson Baronet 1774. Made by Miller and Ross in Eliz. Town." It weighs something over one hundred pounds.



CAUGHNAWAGA CHURCH.

This edifice, now under the management of the Rev. Douw Van OLinda, who has fitted it up for a classic school, is hereafter to be known as the *Fonda Academy*; the first term of which institution commenced with flattering prospects in the latter part of 1844, under the tuition of Mr. Jacob A. Hardenbergh, a graduate of Rutger's College, New Jersey.

At an early period, a small church was constructed of wood

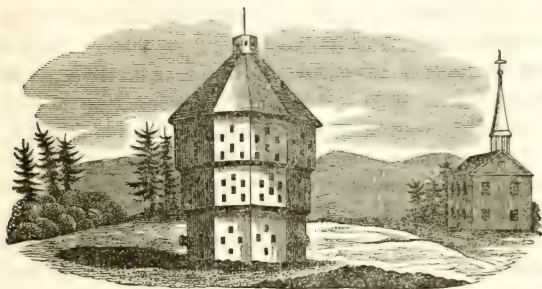
near the Upper Mohawk Castle, at which place the missionary minister, resident at Fort Hunter, sometimes officiated. This church was provided with a small bell, similar to the one on Queen Anne's chapel, and after the revolution, the Indians who had removed from its neighborhood, made application to obtain it. Being denied their request, they succeeded in getting it down in the night; and in a canoe paddled up the Mohawk with it unmolested—transporting it as best they could to Canada.—*Joseph Wagner.*

Churches were erected by *Lutherans* at Stone Arabia in 1770, in the western part of Palatine in 1772, and at the German flats before the revolution. The two latter were of stone. The last named was situated in the valley, on the south side of the river, four miles westward of Little Falls. Some ten rods west of this church stood the *parsonage*, a stone dwelling (torn down to give place to the Erie canal) which was inclosed with palisades having block-house corners, and known in the revolution as Fort Herkimer.\* Fort Dayton, another military post of the Mohawk valley, was situated in the western part of the present village of Herkimer. In going from the former to the latter fort, the river was crossed at a rapid one mile above Fort Herkimer. Fort Plain, a military establishment of great importance in the border transactions of the Mohawk valley, stood eighteen miles eastward of Fort Herkimer, and within the present thriving village which bears its name. Forts Plain, Herkimer and Dayton were all three erected as early as 1776, and in their vicinity many thrilling events transpired, which characterised the war of the revolution on the frontiers of New York; not a few of which have gone down to oblivion.

There was much speculation in new lands in the interior of New York, between the French and American wars with England, and thousands upon thousands of acres changed owners for a mere song—land now valued at millions of dollars. Among

\* Some writers have stated that Fort Herkimer stood near General Herkimer's house—not so: although called after him, it was six miles westward of his residence.

the speculators were Sir William Johnson, Governor Tryon, Major Jelles Fonda, and Colonel John Butler. Lands on the Sacandaga river were brought into market at this period.



FORT PLAIN.

Above is a view of this Fort as it was seen in the revolution, except that it was inclosed by strong palisades. The little church seen in the right of the picture, was burned down by the Indians during the war.

The following sketch of a transaction not generally known, is no doubt the most authentic account of it ever obtained. It is drawn, by permission, from notes of a journey to Niagara, made by a friend in 1806.

In the summer of 1759, Sir William Johnson landed with a body of troops at the mouth of a creek four miles from Niagara, since called Johnson's creek, and took possession of forts Niagara and Schlosser, posts of much importance, on the east side of Niagara river, as they commanded the trade of the upper lakes. In 1760, Mr. Stedman, an Englishman, contracted with Sir William to construct a portage road from Queenston Landing, now Lewiston, to Fort Schlosser, a distance of about eight miles. The road having been completed, on the morning of the 17th Sept., 1763, 15 wagons and teams, mostly oxen, under an escort of 24 men, commanded by a sergeant, and accompanied by the contractor, Stedman, and Capt. Johnson, as a volunteer, set out from Fort Niagara,

with stores, &c., intended for the garrison at Fort Schlosser. Arriving something over two miles from the top of the mountain above Lewiston, and ten or twelve from Niagara, the escort and wagons halted about 11 o'clock, on a little savanna of green sward to rest and take refreshments, beside a gulf called in Indian and English, the *Devil's Hole*. This is a semi-circular precipice or chasm of some two hundred feet diameter up and down the river on the summit, but less at the bottom. A little distance from the brink of the hole is a kind of natural mound, several feet in height, also of crescent shape; and sixty feet from the top issues a fine spring, which dashes down through the underbrush to the river. A small brook in the neighborhood, called the *bloody-run*, now runs into the chasm. The Seneca Indians continued in the French interest at this period, and fearing a hostile movement on their part, a detachment of volunteers consisting of one hundred and thirty men, under the command of Capt. Campbell, marched from Queenston to strengthen the escort. Just as the troops under Capt. C. reached the spot where the escort had halted, about five hundred Indians, who had been concealed behind the mound, sprang from their covert with savage yells, and like so many tigers began an indiscriminate slaughter of the troops, who were thrown into the utmost confusion. Resistance against such odds did not long continue, and those of the party who were not killed or driven from the precipice with their teams, attempted their escape by flight. In the midst of the conflict, Stedman sprang upon a small horse, and giving the faithful animal a slap on the neck with his hand, it bore him over the dead and dying, and through the thick ranks of the foe, who discharged their rifles, and hurled their tomahawks in vain at his head.

Of those who jumped directly down the precipice in front, some seventy or eighty feet, which has an uneven surface below, only one escaped with life. This was a soldier named Mathews, from whom these particulars were obtained by the tourist. He was then living on the Canada shore, near Niagara, and familiarly called *Old Britannia*. Several trees were growing from the bottom of the hole, the tops of which reached near the surface of the ground.

Into one of these trees Corporal Noble leaped and hung, in which position eleven bullets riddled his body. Captain Johnson, of the escort, was killed, and Lieut. Duncan, of the relief, a native of Long Island, and a promising young officer, was wounded in the left arm, of which he died. The whole number of troops and teamsters was about one hundred and seventy-five, of this number only some twenty-five escaped with life, and all of them, except Stedman and Mathews, did so below or near the north end of the hole, at a little sand ridge, which served to break the fall. Of Capt. Campbell's command, only *eleven* escaped with life. The loss of the enemy was inconsiderable compared with that of the British. A short time after this horrid affair, the Indians, who considered Stedman a charmed man, gave him as a reward for his daring feat, a large tract of land, which embraced all that he rode over in his previous flight. He returned to England, taking along this favorite horse, and never afterwards would he allow it to be saddled or harnessed.

My friend T., in whose journal I find the above facts, first visited the Devil's Hole, with a relative, August 10th, 1806, at which time he entered it by descending a tree, to search for evidences of the event related. In the bottom of the chasm he found the skulls of several oxen "mouldering and covered with moss," a piece of a wagon, and the small part of a horn; which latter relic he took from the place, and after retaining it in his possession thirty-eight years, kindly presented to the author.

The close of the French war left the colony of New York deeply in debt, and resort was had to direct taxation to sustain the government. The assessment was levied "By virtue of three acts of General Assembly of the Colony of New York; the first for the payment of the second £100,000 tax, the second for the payment of the £60,000 tax, and the third, for the raising and collecting the arrears of several acts therein mentioned." The commissioners of the county, who set their hands and seals to the warrant sent "Mr. John Fonda, Collector for Mohawks," were "Rens. Nicoll, Marte Halenbeck, Abraham Douw, and Cornelis Van Schaack." The warrant was dated at Albany, July 17th,



1764. The tax on the citizens of the Mohawk valley amounted to £242,17 6—\$607 19, and was collected, except \$2 81 bad debts, and receipted by John Stevenson, in Albany, the 11th of October following. Were not part of this tax list gone, I would present it to the reader. The following are some of the largest sums taxed to individuals on the portions of the manuscript remaining :

	Valuation.	Assess.		Valuation.	Assess.
Sir Wm. Johnson,	£167	£20 17 6	Peter Young,	£13	£1 12 6
Margrit Flipse,	24	3 00 0	John Nukerk,	13	1 12 6
Marte Van OLinda,	21	2 12 6	Hans Klyn,	13	1 12 6
Lewis Groat,	20	2 10 0	Daniel Clas,	10	1 5 0
Davit Pruyn,	20	2 10 0	Guy Johnson,	10	1 5 0
Isaac D. Graf,	18	2 5 0	John Have,	10	1 5 0
Hans Antes,	17	2 2 6	Jacob Potman,	10	1 5 0
James McMaster,	16	2 0 0	Clas D. Graf,	9	1 2 6
Harme Vedder,	16	2 0 0	Harmanis Mabe,	9	1 2 6
Wouter Swart,	16	2 0 0	Cor's Potman,	9	1 2 6
John Johnson,	16	2 0 0	Cor's Nukerk,	9	1 2 6

The following tax list will show the names of many of the citizens living in and near that part of the Mohawk valley now embraced in Montgomery county, and their comparative wealth at that period. The manuscript, which has been preserved among the papers of the late Maj. Fonda, is without date: it is written in a fair, legible hand, and must have been executed a few years prior to the revolution.

*"A List of the persons that are assessed above five pounds, with the sums they are to pay, and the number of days they are to work upon the King's highways, annexed.*

PERSONS NAMES.	Quota.	Annual Assess.	No. Days Work.	PERSONS NAMES.	Quota.	Annual Assess.	No. Days Work.
John Bleven,	£ 6 s 1 d 6	4	4	Christian Earnest,	£ 13 s 3 d 5		
Abraham Hodges,	10 1 6	4	4	John Waters,	12 3 5		
John & Evert Van Eps,	15 3 0	5	5	Christopher McGraw,	9 1 6	4	
Wm. & Woulter Swart,	10 1 6	4	4	James Phillipse,	10 1 6	4	
Martinus Van OLinda,	17 3	5	5	William Snook,	8 1 6	4	
Mary Phillipse,	17 3	5	5	Samuel Pettingall,	8 1 6	4	
Abraham Phillipse,	6 1 6	4	4	Patrick McConnelly,	8 1 6	4	
William Allen,	15 3	5	5	John Van Dewake,	10 1 6	4	
John Souts,	6 1 6	4	4	Peter Young,	10 1 6	4	

PERSON'S NAMES.	Quota.	Annual Assess.	No. Days Work.	PERSONS NAMES.	Quota.	Annual Assess.	No. Days Work.
Jacobus Cromwell,	15	3	5	Timothy Lenderse,	15	3	5
Andrew Frank,	16	3	5	Charles H. Van Eps,	15	3	5
Abraham Van Alstine,	18	3	5	Peter Jost,	6	1	6
Crownidge Kincade,	10	1	6	Philip Phillipse,	13	3	5
John S. Vrooman,	7	1	6	Jacob Van Dewarke,	9	1	6
Adam Sternbergh,	15	3	5	John Everse,	7	1	6
Henry and John Lewis,	6	1	6	Malkert Van Duesar,	12	3	5
Abraham Yates,	20	3	5	Mrs. Sophia Denniston,	6	1	6
David and Peter Lewis,	10	1	6	Capt. Norm'd McLead,	6	1	6
Hendrick Divindorf,	7	3	5	Widow Vrooman & son,	6	1	6
David Potman,	15	3	5	Dow Fonda,	16	3	5
Lips Spinner,	15	3	5	John Funda,	6	1	6
Samuel Rose,	10	1	6	Jelles Funda,	40	9	8
Hendrick Hoff,	10	1	6	Barent B. Wemple,	8	1	6
Adam Gardeneer,	13	3	5	Gilbert Tice,	6	1	6
Arent Bradt,	13	3	5	Peter Cooley,	7	1	6
Adam Dagstader, Sen.	18	3	5	Samson Simens,	15	3	4
Fredrick Dagstader, Sen.	20	3	5	John Wemple,	6	1	6
Hendrick Dagstader, Sr.	20	1	6	Andries Wemple,	6	1	6
John Bowen,	7	1	6	Peter Conyn, Esq.,	30	5	6
William B. Bowen,	6	1	6	Harman Visser,	27	5	6
John V. Potman,	7	1	6	Hanse Clement,	8	1	6
John Butler, Esq.,	27	5	6	Lewis Clement,	14	3	5
John Nare,	12	3	5	Michael Staller,	10	1	6
John and Jacob Kilts,	20	3	5	Daniel McGregor,	10	1	6
Conradt Linkefelter,	11	3	5	Philip Weamer,	6	1	6
Arent Potman,	7	1	6	Baltus Ergetsinger,	8	1	6
Sir Wm. Johnson, Bart.,	202	12	9	Robert Adams,	14	3	4
Sir John Johnson, Kt.,	25	5	6	Martin Lessler,	10	1	6
Col. Daniel Claus,	21	5	6	Frans Salts,	15	3	5
Col. Guy Johnson,	21	5	6	Hanse Clyne,	12	3	5
Frederick Degraff,	6	1	6	Jacob Potman,	9	1	6
Nicholas Degraff,	6	1	6	Cornelius Potman,	10	1	6
I. Degraff & son Jer'h,	13	3	5	Harmanus Meaby,	8	1	6
Lewis Groat,	16	3	5	Garrent C. Newkirk,	8	1	6
Jacob Bushart,	7	1	6	John Newkirk,	10	1	6
Hendrick Bushart,	7	1	6	Peter Martin, Esq.,	13	3	5
Adam Fonda,	9	1	6	Isaac Collier,	10	1	6
Peter Whitmore,	6	1	6	Adam Zeelie,	13	3	5
John & Conradt Smith,	6	1	6	Ephraim Wemple,	13	3	5
Guysbert & Garret Van				Barent Hansen,	7	1	6
Brachler,	6	1	6	Hendrick Hansen,	7	1	6
James Davis,	6	1	6	Abraham Quackenbush,	8	1	6
Peter Frederick & sons,	12	3	5	Jeremiah Quackenbush,	11	3	5
John Wilson,	7	1	6	N. & P. Quackenbush,	10	1	6
J. Rupart & Lottridge,	8	1	6	Vincent Quackenbush,	6	1	6
Peter Service,	18	3	5	Ab'm Quackenbush,	7	1	6
Hans Albrant,	7	1	6	John Malatt,	8	1	6
Andries Snyder,	8	1	6	Samuel Gardeneer,	18	3	5
Hans Doren,	7	1	6	Jacob Gardeneer,	12	3	5
Philip Cromwell,	17	3	5	William Schylder,	6	1	6
Volkert Veeder,	6	1	6	Hans Wart,	7	1	6
Widow Smith and sons,	17	3	4				
John V. Veeder,	27	5	6				
				Total Assess.	£14/11/ 6 555		

I have observed that RUM was one of the principal articles of traffic with the Indians on the frontiers of New York. Says *Col-den*—

“There is one *vice* which the *Indians* have all fallen into, since their acquaintance with the Christians, and of which they could not be guilty before that time, that is *drunkenness*. It is strange, how all the Indian nations, and almost every person among them, male and female, are infatuated with the love of strong drink; they know no bounds to their desire, while they can swallow it down, and then indeed the greatest man among them scarcely deserves the name of a brute.”

*Alcohol* has, in a very great degree depopulated the state of a noble race of men and women, and much demoralized and enervated its present race of inhabitants. One single invoice now before me, of rum purchased in New-York, in October 1770, and designed for the Mohawk valley trade, was for ten hogsheads and twenty barrels, containing seventeen hundred and seventy-nine gallons; which, at the low price of two shillings and four pence, amounted to over *five hundred dollars*.

Tryon county, so called after the Governor of New York at the time, was organized in 1772, and took in the present counties of Montgomery, Fulton, Herkimer and portions of several others. *The first court of general quarter sessions of the peace* for this county, was held in Johnstown, so called after Sir William Johnson, on Tuesday September 8, 1772. The Bench consisted of

“Guy Johnson, *Judge*.

“John Butler, Peter Conyne, *Judges*.

“Sir John Johnson, knight, Daniel Claus, John Wells, Jelles Fonda, *Assistant Judges*.

“John Collins, Joseph Chew, Adam Loucks, John Fry, Fr. Young, Peter Ten Broeck, *Justices*.”

In 1791, the county of Herkimer was organized from Tryon, and called after General Herkimer who fell at Oriskany; and in 1794 the name of Tryon county was changed to that of Montgomery, who fell at Quebec.

About the year 1800, might have been seen, as in New England at a still later period, at some public place in every town in New York, a public whipping-post and stocks; and justices of the

peace had authority to order that individual confined in the stocks, who got drunk or used profane language. Criminals guilty of petty thefts, and other violations of the law, were not unfrequently seen with their hands tied, and their arms drawn up to their extent around the public post, which was made square, receiving upon their bare backs, from the hands of a sheriff or constable, the scorpion lash of justice.

A few moments may not be unprofitably spent, in reflecting on the great and important changes that have passed over New York since the peace of 1783—changes not only visible on every water-course and thoroughfare, but on almost every acre of ground, from the then frontier settlements of Albany and Tryon counties to the shores of St. Lawrence and the great western lakes. In the territory named, and at the period to which I have alluded, where were dense forests, unbroken for many miles, may now be seen waving fields of grain, and flocks and herds upon a thousand hills—may now be heard the complicated machinery of the mechanic arts—may now be felt the genial influence of unfettered science. The revolution in mind and individual interest in eastern New York, under cultivation two generations removed from the present, is almost as apparent as that in matter, where then roamed the happy savage in quest of his game. The difference in the mode of traveling, particular in the Mohawk valley, in the last thirty years, is worthy especial notice. Public conveyance was then either in stages or boats propelled on the river by manual labor;—rail-road cars, moved by steam power have now not only driven post-coaches from the valley, but the commodious canal packet drawn by horses, now subserves the purpose of the slow moving Durham craft. Indeed, the New England tourist, who might then have been seen mounted on horseback, with an enormous portmanteau fastened upon his saddle, journeying in the valley, is seen no longer: his economy is rendered unnecessary by the cheapness of the passenger line-boat.

Extensive manufactories—indeed large cities and villages have sprung up as if by enchantment, where but little more than half a century ago might have been heard the dismal howl of the

wolf; the frightful scream of the panther; or the terrific yell of the savage. In fact, little hamlets, in number almost countless, with the domes of their seminaries and church spires towering aloft, are scattered over the hunting grounds of the mocasined Indian; the site of whose little bark dwelling and intricate foot-path, has been usurped by an iron-bound road, or an artificial river.

Not only has enterprise peopled those portions of New York lying west of the frontier settlements at the close of the revolution, with a population of *one and a half millions* of freemen, with an estimated valuation of property exceeding \$100,000,000, and a real one more than five times greater; but it has thickly populated several States west of New York; and the American Eagle, as if undetermined where to alight, is conducting the hardy sons of New England and New York toward the shores of the great Pacific. Judging from the past and present, what may we reasonably expect will be the future condition and resources of the Empire State?—resources which now more than equal those of the thirteen States, when under British tyranny.



## CHAPTER V.

There were among the early Schoharie settlers, some remarkable for great personal strength. Cornelius, Samuel, Peter and Isaac, sons of Peter Vrooman, are said to have possessed the strength of giants. They erected the first saw-mill in the county, which stood in *clauver-uy*, on the little Schoharie kill. Two of those brothers could easily carry a good sized log on the carriage. Many anecdotes are related by the aged, showing the strength of the Vrooman family. At the hill mentioned as the Long-berg, on the road to Albany, Cornelius, the strongest of the brothers, always made a practice when going to Albany with wheat, to carry one or two bags, each containing two or three skipples, up this hill to favor his horses. Twenty-five skipples was the ordinary load to Albany, and usually brought fifty cents per skipple.

Samuel Vrooman is said to have carried at one time, twelve skipples of wheat and a harrow with iron teeth, from his father's house across a small bridge back of it, and set them down in a field. At another time, Cornelius carried ten skipples of peas, the same harrow, and a brother on the top of them, the same distance : in either case, eight or nine hundred pounds.

The stout Vroomans had a remarkably strong sister. A quarrelsome man being at her father's, warm words passed between him and her brother Cornelius, when the sister, fearing the consequences, if her kinsman laid hands upon the intruder in anger, seized him, although a pretty stout man, and pitched him neck and heels out of the house. This we may look upon as a very charitable act, considering it was done solely to save his life. There were other individuals in Schoharie who, if not as strong

as the brothers mentioned, were sufficiently so to protect themselves. Several of the Boucks and Borsts, it is said, could easily raise a barrel of cider and drink from the bung-hole.

Before the revolution, and for some forty years after its close, there was much horse-racing and sporting of different kinds in the Schoharie and Mohawk valleys. An *ox-race* once took place in Cobelskill. There was also much fair boxing, and many quarrels were settled by personal combat. The settlers sometimes played cards for coppers, but seldom for silver.

About the year 1770, a challenge was given and accepted between the people of the Mohawk and Schoharie valleys, to try speed and strength. Which gave it, is uncertain. The Mohawk champions went to Schoharie at the appointed time, and multitudes were assembled to witness the strife. A sleigh was placed on bare ground, and with twelve heavy men in it, Cornelius Vrooman, by the end of the tongue, drew it one and a half feet. Cornelius Fonda, the Mohawk bully, attempted, but in vain, to start it. On the same day, Adam Crysler ran a foot-race with one Dockstader from the Mohawk valley—the former winning the race with ease.

Formerly, almost every country woman, in some parts of America, was to be seen in certain seasons of the year, at work on a farm. It is now very justly determined, that *woman's* place is in the house and *man's* in the field.

Wheat and poultry were the most important articles of traffic taken from Schoharie to Albany, an hundred years ago, which was usually done by sleighing. But little grain, except wheat, was carried to market for many years by the early settlers: in fact, much of that grain was fed their horses by the Germans and Dutch. The fondness of the Dutch for good horses, has originated a proverb, that “a Dutchman thinks more of his horse than his wife.”

In going from the Schoharie and Mohawk valleys, to and from Albany, some fifty years ago, the Dutch were in the habit of running their horses up a good share of every hill. Starting the team as they neared it, they dashed on at a furious rate, thus gain-

ing an impetus which carried them nearly to the top of the hill, arriving at which they often halted to rest or feed.

It was customary, as already observed, for the people of Schoharie to go to market in squads, and not unfrequently fifteen or twenty teams were seen together, some of which were driven by the wives and daughters of the farmers, who were of the party. The custom yet prevails of their accompanying their husbands, fathers and brothers to market; not, however, in the capacity of drivers. Mounted upon the top of a good load of grain, the tidy house-wife or neatly clad daughter is often to be seen as a passenger—or rather as a *mortgage* on the load, as they are not inaptly termed: for she claims some portion of the proceeds to be appropriated to the purchase of a new dress, or such other articles as her wardrobe may require.

Weddings, in the days of which I am speaking, were celebrated differently from what they now are. The law then required the publishing of the bans three successive times, in a religious meeting, before a couple could get married. After the notice had been once read, the young friends usually had a dance, and after the couple were united, they had several dances. Some good anecdotes are told of these weddings. Before the revolution, says *George Warner*, a man came from Freehold and married a Miss Schaeffer. Her father was rather fastidious about asking some of his neighbors, on the score of their not being sufficiently opulent, but invited among the guests an Indian friend, and gave him permission to ask such of *his* friends as he chose. The Indian, on such an occasion, shows no great respect for persons—indeed, he never does unless it be for distinguished prowess, and acknowledged personal favors—and the sequel proved he had many friends: for when the guests began to assemble, a large part of the Schoharie tribe were there, some with wedding garments on, and others with few garments, if any at all on. The dismayed parent was not a little perplexed, and in order to get rid of his red guests, he freely distributed several gallons of rum, when they pronounced the wedding a good one—gave a glorious whoop and retired, to the great relief of the family.

Judge Brown related the following—to use his own words—as “a nobleman’s wedding;” which took place in his younger days. George Henry Stubrach was married to a daughter of John Frederick Bouck, who lived in the present town of Fulton. In an open field near Mr. Bouck’s residence, a booth was erected and a liberty pole raised. The marriage ceremony took place in the early part of the day, and the guests resorted to the booth. On such occasions, there was generally some *quidnunc* present, who assumed the responsibilities of a captaincy, to direct the movements of the joyous company. At the time of which we are speaking Nicholas York was the admitted dictator. While all were busily engaged in such occupations as their own taste selected, a circumstance took place which afforded the party an unexpected source of amusement. A woodchuck made its appearance in a fallow near the booth. Captain York instantly ordered the field surrounded, directing a simultaneous march to the centre. The party had not approached to a concussion, before the intruder was slain. It was handed over to the captain—whose word on such occasions was law. He cut a piece of flesh from the warm victim and ate it, requiring all, male and female, to follow his example. Most attempted, but few succeeded in getting down the dainty morsel. A general “removal of deposits” was the result of this austere mandate; after which the guests again resorted to their chosen occupations. In this jolly manner the festivities were continued for three successive days. What disposition to make of the guests nights, I am at a loss to know. On the evening of the third day, the blushing bride was taken home to the residence of her husband, in Kneiskern’s dorf. *Two barrels of home brewed beer, twenty-two gallons of rum and a proportionate quantity of wine*, were the spirits poured down to raise the spirits of the party up, on this noted occasion: and it is a fact worthy of remark, that all the liquors were quaffed from *wooden dippers*. This wedding took place when it was the fashion for ladies to wear short dresses—flowered silk hose—and French-heeled slippers, fastened with silver buckles. The large *pocket* made separately and worn loose over the dress, as also the *hoop*,

both of which were part of female attire at a later period, may have been in service at the time of this wedding. This brief description will serve to give the reader a pretty good idea of the manner in which most weddings of consequence were celebrated in bygone days. Nearly all the people—old as well as young—were then in the habit of dancing on such occasions. Their style, perhaps, was not of the most graceful kind. The French steps had not then been taught in that beautiful valley. The last wedding which *seventy-two hours* were required to complete, is believed to have been that of the late Judge Swart, and took place in April, 1775. The revolution broke them up, as they could not in safety be celebrated then; and after the war was over, few felt as though they could afford to give them—many being under the necessity of erecting themselves new dwellings, upon the ashes of their old ones.

*Jacob Becker* related an anecdote, which shows the faithful manner in which those weddings were celebrated. They had in his father's family at one time a shoemaker at work, so that a brother of his might learn the trade. While he was there, Joseph Kneiskern—a widower, was married. Becker's brother George, several years older than himself, attended the wedding. As he was putting on a new pair of shoes with very thick soles—the workmanship of the cobbler, the latter good humoredly told him if he danced those soles through, he would put on a new pair for nothing. Away went the guest to the wedding, from which he returned home on the evening of the *third* day. He pulled off his shoes and threw them to the mechanic, who, on examining, found he had been taken at his word—and that not only the outer, but the inner soles of both were worn entirely through. In those days house-floors in New England and New York, were scoured clean, and instead of a carpet, received a coat of fine white sand—which will enable the reader to understand how the shoes could have been *used up*.

It was customary for the groom, after the ordeal of proposing *the* question, to make his intended a present of some kind—usually a pair of silver shoe-buckles, sleeve buttons—or snuff-box.



Whether the modern *low-lived* and *ill-bred* custom of celebrating weddings in the street, usually termed *horning*—now in vogue in *ignorant* communities—prevailed before the revolution in Schoharie, I can not say.

Several black fiddlers were, in their day, noted persons. Jack, a slave belonging to Col. Zielie, and another of the same name, belonging to John Lawyer, who, to distinguish them, were called Jack Zielie and Jack Lawyer, flourished in their way, about the time of the revolution. A frolic could not easily be sustained then, unless one of them was present. They played the fiddle, holding it in various positions, sometimes before and at others behind them. One of the two was formerly represented on a tavern sign (painted by George Tiffany, Esq.) as playing for a jolly company; some part of which device is still visible on the sign now in the cabinet of John Gebhard, jr., Esq. of Schoharie.

Dancing or *frolicing*, as then called, was still the order of the day some fifty years ago, in most of the Dutch and German settlements. Old, middle-aged, and young—dressed much alike—usually assembled on those occasions, which were on Saturday evening, and as often as two or three times in a month. Males frequently danced with their hats on. The female dress was strapped caps of lawn, striped linsey petticoats, with short-gowns of differently striped calico or silk, an outside chintz pocket tied round the waist with ribbon or tape, and high heeled cloth boots. After the guests were assembled, a six or eight reel, then a four, a jig, and a hornpipe were danced in succession, in the centre of a room crowded by spectators to a small space for the dancers, if a fight did not take place before the hornpipe was reached—which was very frequently the case—owing to the impatience and frequent liquoring of the gentlemen not dancing. Then might have been seen a happy couple, manifesting great disparity of age, "*jigging merrily down the middle, through a line of succeeding generations.*" The musician was generally either Jack Lawyer or Jack Zielie, who accompanied the motion of his bow with a continual stamping of one foot—saying, in effect, *hear dis nigger mark time on de floor.* The slaves of the citizens, on those oc-

casions, were permitted to witness the performance at the doors and windows, which they literally filled. At the period of which I am speaking, much liquor was drank in all the frontier settlements, and *pugilism*, though not then treated as a science, was of very frequent occurrence. It was not at all uncommon during those personal encounters, for a young miss to hold the coat and hat of her lover, while he was knocking another man down, or being knocked down himself. The reader is aware that the banner of *Temperance*—the friend of peace and social order—was not unfurled o'er the land *fifty years ago*.

Judge Brown assured me, that in his younger days he often made bows and arrows, and hand-sleds, to sell to boys. The ordinary price for one of the latter was three coppers. This fact is mentioned to show the value of money in the French war. He said he had, among other things to gain a livelihood when young, often fiddled for a respectable company to dance. His wife humorously remarked to him while relating that fact—"and from a *fiddler* you rose to be a *Judge*."

Few dishes were formerly seen upon the tables of the Schoharie people. It was no uncommon sight to see a family of eight or ten persons seated at an old fashioned *round table*—which was turned up in every dwelling when not in use—each with a spoon eating from a single dish of *supaan*. Every member had a cavity in the pudding filled with milk, from which he or she, was allowed freely to scoop. On eating through into each other's divisions, a quickened motion of the spoon ensued, if trouble did not. If bowls were not then found indispensable in a large family, for eating a supper of *supaan* and milk, neither were plates in eating a hearty dinner. Each member of the family—seated at the round table, the quality and neatness of which no cloth concealed—was given a large slice of bread upon which they ate their meat and potatoes; after which, the time serving plate was broken up, thrust into a dish to receive a coat of *dope* (gravy,) and soon devoured. Bread was then sliced by one of the heads of the family, and dealt out around the table as a whist player would deal his cards. Rice and milk was, like *supaan*, also eaten from one

dish, after receiving the liberal scrapings of a cake of maple sugar. Happy days were those when the good house-wife had few bowls or plates to wash, and little envy about the quality or number of those possessed by her neighbor.

That good custom of calling on friends and reciprocating kind feelings on the first day of the year, which still prevails in our larger towns, existed in Schoharie before the revolution: and no people improved the privileges of the custom or turned them to better account, than did the Indians. They not only called on the whites with a happy *neiw-jahr*, expecting to renew their claims to friendship by eating cakes and drinking liquor, but also expected a liberal donation of eatables to take to their cabin, the squaws carrying baskets on their heads to receive them. On those gala days, the tables of the Germans and Dutch were loaded with several skipples of bread and fried cakes, and a fearful array of liquors. Said *Mattice Ball* to the author—"I have alone cut up six loaves of bread on new year's day, and distributed to the Indians."

In the Dutch settlements along the Mohawk, calls began among neighbors on new year's day at midnight, with the following greeting:

"Ik wens u glucksaalic nieu jar!  
Dat gy lang leben mag—  
Veel geben mag—  
En de kernigh-reich von de himmel erben mogh!"

I wish you a happy new-year!  
May you long live—  
Have much to give—  
And in heaven at last appear!

*Christmas* is a day still observed in the Dutch and German settlements of New York, though not as much as formerly. On the evening before Christmas, children hang up their stockings on going to bed, expecting to find them filled in the morning with presents, such as cakes, fruit, nuts, &c. by an imaginary visitor called Santa Claas. If the children have been wilful and refractory, the messenger of St. Nicholas, who is only a neighbor disguised, sometimes arrives before bed-time with a whip instead of

a present ; and lucky are the mischievous urchins who can hide themselves under a bed, or their mother's apron to avoid chastisement. Formerly, the occasion was improved to punish disobedient slaves, whose superstitious fears prevented them from penetrating the disguise which often concealed some member of the family in which they lived.

*Paas*, Easter-day ; and *Pinkster*, Whitsunday, are days also noted in the annals of the Dutch. The former day is ushered in by the young, with presents of eggs colored various hues ; while the latter is more particularly observed by the colored population. The blacks are seen with smiling faces on that day, clad in their best apparel, going to visit their friends—often bearing flowers called by them *Pinkster-bloomies* ; which are known in New England as blossoms of the swamp-apple.

The early farmers of Schoharie turned their attention mostly to raising wheat, as do their descendants—or rather did, until the *weevil* prevented. They have ever kept too many horses, and too few cattle and sheep for profit—the well fed horse being a very expensive boarder. Not many of the Dutch to this day keep large dairies, as very few of them make English cheese. Some of them, however, make considerable butter, and the world may be challenged to excel them in making it palatable. Many of them churn the milk with the cream, and when that is not done, it goes through a process in working it called washing, which in either case, divests it of a greasy flavor more common to butter made in English settlements. The Dutch also make excellent bread.

*Sour-cROUT*\* is a German dish much eaten in the Schoharie and Mohawk valleys. Many families make a barrel of it every fall.

\* This article is made as follows. Late in the fall a quantity of good sound cabbage is prepared as it would be for *slaugh*, or salad, to conform to Webster. It is cut with knives set in a plank. In a clean barrel the packing is commenced. A layer of cabbage is closely laid by the aid of a heavy pounder, after which a handful of common salt is sprinkled upon it, and also a little water, to moisten the whole. This process is repeated until a sufficiency is secured ; when a board is laid upon the top and kept down by weights. The barrel is then put in the cellar. Fermentation causes a scum to rise upon

I have before observed that witchcraft was believed in by some of the Schoharie people, many years ago. A man by the name of Rector once shot, with impunity, an old woman living on the bank of the Schoharie, opposite the present village of Esperance, said to have been bewitched. She was shot through a window of her own house. Cattle were sometimes killed for the same supposed malady and burned up. I have spoken of old Doctor Moulter, as a believer in witchcraft. He is said to have had repeated battles with witches, and on one occasion to have encountered seven at once, at a small brook, near the corner of the roads in the north part of Schoharie village, and retreated until he placed his back against the brick church, when he overpowered them. It is not unlikely he met a *Mary Magdalene*, as they still lurk at times about the same corners. One anecdote more of the old Doctor. He pretended he could drive *rats* from one house to another, and was often hired by the superstitious—by whom he was very liberally paid, to drive the rats from their dwellings to those of their neighbors with whom they were not on good terms. Moulter, at precisely such an hour of the night, would rap on the corners of the house—repeat a lingo of his own, and command every rat, dead or alive, to leave the house thus thumped, and go to such an one as he was hired to send them to. Possibly he threatened to *bewitch* them if they did not pack up and be off. The silly doctrine of witchcraft has fled the Schoharie valley, never more to enter it.

The inhabitants of Schoharie suffered but little in the French war. A block fort was then erected on the west side of the road, nearly opposite the residence of the late Philip Dietz. It is said, however, to have been but little used and not even garrisoned. The Six Nations of Indians which embraced the Schoharie tribe, were English allies in the war, consequently the frontier settlements were not much exposed. A small number of hostile Indians entered Schoharie once during this war. Jacob Folluck

the board, which should be cleansed as often as the barrel is disturbed. Sourcrout is usually cooked with potage, and for persons who exercise, it is very nutritious. It is much used in long voyages at sea.



was the only person killed by them. Near the present residence of David Lawyer, on Foxes creek, the enemy were secreted by an oat-field, intending the capture of several persons expected there to cut oats. Mr. Folluck with his dog and gun had just left home to go hunting. Passing the Indians, his dog began to bark; when the former, fearing discovery, shot the dog and his master, whom they scalped; and then precipitately left Schoharie. Mr. Sternberg, returning from Beaver Dam, passed unmolested by his concealed foes, just before his neighbor was shot. They were desirous of taking several prisoners at once, and he, being alone, passed unmolested. Sternberg had lost part of his nose, which was observed by the Indians in ambush. After the war he was recognized by some of them in the Mohawk valley, by the deficiency of his nasal organ. He was asked if he did not remember passing by the oat-field on the morning his neighbor was killed, *leading a cow by a rope?* He replied that he did. He was then assured that Folluck would not have been injured, but for his dog.

At the beginning of the French war a treaty was held with the Indians near where Boyd's mill now stands, in the present town of Middleburgh. The meeting was very numerously attended. Queter, (Peter,) an Oquago chief, who it would seem was in the French interest, closed a speech as follows. Laying down an iron wedge upon a fallen tree, said he, alluding to their union with the French, "*We are like that—strong and can not be broken!*" Mrs. Josiah Swart, who perfectly understood the Indian dialect, is said to have acted as interpreter on the occasion. When the symbol was explained, Mrs. S. emphatically addressed Queter in his native tongue, and in behalf of the British interest as follows. Said she—taking a guinea from her pocket and laying it upon the wedge, "*We are like that, which is equally strong and can outlive your symbol; for if both be buried in the ground the rust will destroy yours, while ours will come out as strong and as bright as ever!*" When the squaw's speech was interpreted—Indians call all women squaws—it was pronounced superior to any other delivered on the occasion. It is supposed

Sir William Johnson—under whom some of the white citizens and Indians of Schoharie served during this war, was present at this meeting, as there were chiefs assembled from several tribes. Abraham, a Schoharie chief, was among the speakers on the occasion. On the same ground, after the Canadas were conquered, a jubilee was held, at which time *a barrel of rum was drank*. A bonfire was also made by piling a large quantity of pine knots around a dry tree, the light of which, when “the evening shades prevailed,” beautified the rich mountain scenery around. At this jolly festival, *Judge Brown*, from whom these facts were obtained, wrestled with a young Indian and threw him. He bellowed terribly when he got up, and his mother hearing his cries, ran to the spot and struck Brown upon the head with a pine knot, which felled him to the ground and nearly extinguished life.

Pleasure wagons were unknown in Schoharie in former times, and persons attending church, going to frolics, or to visit distant friends, usually went on horse-back. Many a horse, to which had been fed a double allowance of wheat for the occasion, has borne not only his master to a dance, but at the same time a substantial guest of the gentler sex. Riding on horse-back was a healthy exercise much indulged in by ladies formerly. The side-saddles upon which they rode, exhibit the pretty form of a large mud-turtle.

When neighbors returned from social visits, they always carried home for the children, a liberal quantity of *oli-cooks*—small round cakes with raisins in the centre and fried in lard, and *sweet cakes*.

The practice among the early Germans and Dutch, of sparking it without fuel or rush-light, has now become obsolete.

That the Americans as a people have degenerated from their ancestors in point of stature, limitation of life, and ability to endure fatigue, would seem to be a fact generally admitted. Some of the causes it may be well to notice, as it is highly important as a nation, we should not only have vigorous understandings, but strength of body to plan and execute any undertaking man may perform. One of the most obvious causes of declining

strength, is the sedentary life of an increasing number of our citizens, added to the fact that far too little exercise is taken in the open air. It is so ordered on our planet, that man shall acquire a living *by the sweat of his brow*—and it is further ordained, that the labor implied in the mandate shall invigorate his bodily powers. Another reason why we do not possess the constitutions of our ancestors, is, our luxurious mode of life when compared with theirs. We use more tea, coffee and sugar than they did, and our food is frequently seasoned to death. In fact, modern cookery is becoming a science, calculated to pamper the appetite of the indolent; leaving the victim no other excuse than *pastry* for becoming a gouty dyspeptic. Another palpable cause of pulmonary habits, is *fashionable dressing*. What tends much to weaken us, although perhaps not so considered, is the use of stoves instead of fire-places for warming rooms: and I may add to this another, in the general introduction of bolting-cloths into grist-mills. *Andrew Loucks*, who, at our interview, was in his ninety-seventh year, in answer to the question, “why were people of your day healthier than those born at a later period,” replied—“We ate lighter food when I was a boy than at present, such as soups; used a great deal of milk and but little tea and coffee: we sometimes made chocolate by roasting wheat flour in a pot, though not often. But ah! added the old man, “young people are now up late nights—to run about evenings *is not good*, but to take the morning air *is good*.”

I should, perhaps, have remarked that the feeding of candy and sweat-meats to children, has tended more than most people imagine, to destroy the vigor of our race. There are, however, in spite of the evils of infant pupilage, causes beginning to operate favorably, for the extension of human life, so that in the aggregate, it is estimated that the average limitation of man's existence is now annually on the increase. Reasons obvious for this are, that *science* is augmenting its *mustery* of disease, while *temperance* is manifesting its benevolent operations in its *prevention*.

The first *tea party* in Schoharie county was given by one of the Vrooman families, in Vrooman's Land. Miss Loucks, a sister of

my informant, was a guest. When the *enlivener* was announced as ready, the party gathered about a round table, upon which stood not a morsel of any thing to eat, except a liberal lump of maple sugar, placed beside each cup. As the India beverage entered the cups from a kettle in which it had been boiled as one would boil potatoes, great was the curiosity to know how it might taste ; but it was soon satisfied in most of the guests, who sipped and did nothing but sip, at a beverage that would have borne an egg. No milk was used in the tea at Vrooman's. Miss Loucks, who did not like sugar, ashamed to have the rest of the party think she had not used her's, slipped it into a side pocket and carried it home. The ancient Dutch custom always placed a lump of sugar beside each cup, and did not allow it to dissolve until it entered the mouth, when a frequent nibble sufficed.—*A. Loucks*. In doing the honors of a tea-table 25 years ago, the question—*will you bite or stir?*—was asked each guest.

Before tracing those events of the American Revolution, which the reader, in the course of this work, is to expect, I will insert for the benefit of the young, some of the leading causes which brought it about.

Much had occurred during the colonizing of the several American states, to estrange their affection and allegiance from the British Crown. Repeated attempts had been made to abrogate their charters—limit their manufactures, and circumscribe their commerce : while numerous measures were adopted to render them more servile, and less confident in their own capacity for government and self-protection.

The war between Great Britain and France, called the French war, which lasted from 1755 to 1762, and ended so gloriously for Britain in the conquest of Canada and other French possessions in America, discovered to England the importance of her American colonies. The English, at that period, knew but little of the true state of feeling existing in America, except that obtained through prejudiced sources : which remark is not wholly inapplicable, even at the present day. The war to which I have alluded, created for Britain a heavy national debt. To liquidate this debt, the colonies were taxed, without having a voice in the councils

of the mother country ; against which they firmly, and with great unanimity remonstrated. The British ministry, ignorant of the geography of the colonies, treated those popular remonstrances with a degree of indifference and contempt, that tended to lessen the confidence of the colonists in the English government. To the mad policy the British ministry pursued, there were in England some most honorable opposers. Among the foremost may be registered the illustrious names of a Pitt, a Conway and a Barre. From the fact, that the colonists found some noble champions in England to assert their rights, they were the more united and untiring in their attempts to obtain redress. As the criminal, if restrained even for an imaginary offence, is the more closely confined and watched if he makes any attempt to regain his liberty, so it was with the colonies ; the more they remonstrated, the heavier the manacles that were wrought for them. It is not to be wondered at, that a people taught from the cradle to appreciate liberty, should manfully assert and maintain it.

A system of taxation was devised by the British ministry as early as 1754. The plan proposed that the colonies should erect fortifications, raise troops, &c.; with power to draw on the British treasury to defray the expense of the same—the *whole ultimately to be reimbursed by a tax from the mother country on the colonies*. This plan was objected to by the sagacious Franklin, who, in a written reply to Governor Shirley of Massachusetts, proved clearly that the Americans could never submit to a tax that would render them *servile*—that they were already taxed indirectly without having a voice, being compelled to pay heavy duties on the manufactures of the mother country ; although many of the articles might be manufactured on American soil, or purchased cheaper in some other foreign market.

Dissatisfaction was for years gaining ground in the colonies ; and as the intelligence of the people increased, so that they could the better appreciate the value of *liberty*, the prejudices against the mother country were correspondingly augmented. Every new step the ministry took, having for its ultimate object to fix upon the Americans a system of taxation, was regarded with jeal-



ousy. They were aware that Great Britain had so fettered their foreign trade, as almost wholly to confine their commerce to herself.

The French war had swelled the national debt of England to nearly *three hundred and twenty millions* of dollars. George Grenville, then prime minister of England, wishing to devise some means for raising a revenue to meet the increased expenses of the British government, which should not prove onerous *at home*, proposed to raise a revenue *in America* to go into the exchequer of Great Britain. The first act for this object was passed in 1764. It imposed a duty on "*clayed sugar, indigo, &c.*," and would have been submitted to, had it not been closely followed by others still more oppressive. Governor Bernard, of Massachusetts, issued a pamphlet, doubtless from sinister motives, justifying the course of England. He recommended abolishing the colonial charters—a new division of the colonies—a nobility for life in each division—the whole to come under one general government, and that to be under the control of the King, abolishing, at the same time, religious freedom of opinion, etc. It may well be imagined what effect sentiments would produce in America, which were intended to demolish colonial rights. In March, of the same year, Mr. Grenville reported a resolution imposing certain *stamp duties* on the colonies. It was not to be acted upon, however, until the next session of Parliament. Opportunity being thus afforded the colonies, nearly all expressed in the interim, their disapprobation. In strong terms the House of Burgesses, of Virginia, signified their sense of the measure. They addressed lucid and sensible remonstrances to the King and both houses of Parliament. In those, they exhibited the want of a precedent to such a proceeding—the subversion of their rights as subjects of Great Britain—the exhausted state of their finances by the late war, which left that colony involved in a debt, to cancel which must impose for years to come a tax on her citizens—the general depression of business—their present exposed state, as the Indians on the frontier were unsubdued, and might increase their colonial debt, &c. The addresses throughout, breathed a tone of humble firmness. Those

memorials *were not even allowed to be read* in the House of Commons. Doctor Franklin, who was then in England, waited upon Mr. Grenville in person, to persuade him to abandon a measure, he well knew must excite the whole continent. Grenville persevered, and in March, 1765, the obnoxious bill was brought into the House of Commons. General Conway was the only member who openly contended against the *right* of Parliament to enact such a law. Charles Townsend, an advocate for the bill, closed a long and rather eloquent speech as follows :

“ And now will those Americans, children *planted by our care, nourished by our indulgence*, till they are grown to a degree of strength and opulence, and *protected by our arms*, will they grudge to contribute their mite to relieve us from the heavy weight of that burden which we lie under ?”

Colonel Barre, one of the most respectable members of the House of Commons, with strong feelings of indignation in his countenance and expression, replied to Mr. Townsend in the following eloquent and laconic manner :

“ THEY PLANTED BY YOUR CARE ?—No. Your oppressions planted them in America. They fled from your tyranny into a then uncultivated land, where they were exposed to all the hardships to which human nature is liable ; and among others, to the cruelties of a savage foe, the most subtle, and, I will take upon me to say, the most terrible, that ever inhabited any part of God’s earth. And yet, actuated by principles of true English liberty, they met all these hardships with pleasure, when they compared them with those they suffered in their own country, from men who should have been their friends.

“ THEY NOURISHED BY YOUR INDULGENCE ?—They grew up by your neglect of them. As soon as you began to care about them, that care was exercised in sending persons to rule them in one department and in another, who were perhaps the *deputies* of *deputies* to some members of this House, sent to spy out their liberties, to misrepresent their actions, and to prey upon them.—Men whose behavior on many occasions, has caused the blood of those sons of liberty to recoil within them.—Men promoted to the highest seats of justice, some of whom to my knowledge were glad, by going to a foreign country, to escape being brought to the bar of a court of justice in their own.

“ THEY PROTECTED BY YOUR ARMS ?—They have nobly taken up arms in your defence. They have exerted a valor amidst their constant and laborious industry, for the defence of a country whose

frontier was drenched in blood, while its interior parts yielded all its little savings to your emolument. And believe—remember I this day tell you so, that same spirit of freedom which actuated that people at first, will accompany them still: but prudence forbids me to explain myself further. God knows I do not at this time speak from any motives of party heat; what I deliver are the genuine sentiments of my heart. However superior to me in general knowledge and experience the respectable body of this House may be, yet I claim to know more of Americans than most of you, having seen and been conversant in that country. The people, I believe, are as truly loyal as any subjects the King has, but a people jealous of their liberties, and who will vindicate them, if ever they should be violated: but the subject is too delicate—I will say no more.”

The bill was passed by the Commons, and met with no opposition at all in the House of Lords. On the twenty-second of the same month, 1765, it received the royal assent. Soon after the passage of the bill, Doctor Franklin, in a letter to Mr. Charles Thompson, afterwards secretary to Congress, thus writes: “The sun of liberty is set; you must light up the candles of industry and economy.” Said Mr. Thompson, in his reply to Franklin,—“Be assured that we shall light up torches of quite another sort.” To Mr. Ingersoll, who left London about the time the bill passed, Doctor Franklin said: “Go home and tell your people to get children [for soldiers] as fast as they can.” The act, which was not to take effect until the following November, provided, that all contracts should be written on *stamped paper*, or have no force in law. As a matter of course, the paper was to be furnished at extravagant prices. As it was foreseen that unusual measures would be required to enforce a law, which, from its very nature, must meet with resistance, provision was made that all penalties for its violation might be recovered in the admiralty courts, which received their appointment from the crown. This was intended to obviate the process of trial by *jury*, as it was supposed no colonial jury would aid in enforcing a law so obnoxious. The news of its final passage was received in the colonies with sorrowing of heart. Almost every thing was done by the people that could be, to manifest their abhorrence of the stamp act. The shipping in the harbor at Boston displayed colors at half mast; church-

bells were muffled and tolled, and societies in most of the colonies were formed to resist the execution of the law. Masters of vessels who brought the stamps, were treated with indignity, and compelled to deliver up the stamps to the populace, who made bonfires of them and the law. Effigies of Andrew Oliver, who had been appointed stamp-distributer for the colony of Massachusetts, and the British minister, lord North, (who had succeeded Mr. Grenville,) and some of his advisers, were made, and in solemn mockery, publicly burned. Justices of the peace refused to interpose their authority to enforce the law. Stamp officers were compelled to yield to the popular will, and agree never to deliver a stamp. And what was most alarming to Great Britain, many of the merchants entered into solemn engagements to import no more goods from the mother country, until the act was repealed.

In the month of May following the passage of the act, five spirited resolutions against the law were introduced into the legislature of Virginia, by Patrick Henry, and after a very warm debate, were adopted. The fifth resolution read as follows :

“ *Resolved* therefore, That the General Assembly of this colony have the sole right and power to lay taxes and impositions upon the inhabitants of this colony ; and that every attempt to vest such power in any person or persons whatever, other than the General Assembly aforesaid, has a manifest tendency to destroy British as well as American freedom.” [Nearly at the same time the Assembly of Massachusetts adopted similar resolves.]

In the city of New York the stamp-act was printed, under the title of “ The folly of England, and the ruin of America,” and thus hawked about the streets. When it became known that colonial assemblies were evincing hostility to the law, the timid became more bold and the tendency to mobocracy could not be restrained. In many parts of Connecticut and Rhode-Island, mobs to oppose the law were collected, while in Boston the populace wantonly destroyed the buildings and property of the stamp officers. In June the Legislature of Massachusetts proposed the expediency of calling a Continental Congress, to meet in New York the following October. Nine of the colonies sent delegates. The result of their deliberations was, a declaration of rights, in which



they claimed the exclusive right to tax themselves, and the privilege of trial by jury, a memorial to the House of Lords, and a petition to the King, and Commons. Colonies prevented by the proroguing power of their governors from sending delegates to the convention, expressed their earliest possible approbation of the proceedings. On the first day of November, when the stamp-act was to take effect, sadness was manifest in all the colonies. In Boston the workshops and stores were closed, and while the bells tolled as for a funeral, effigies of the friends of the act, were marched in solemn procession through the streets, to a gallows on Boston neck, where, after the hang-man had done his duty, they were cut down and destroyed. At Portsmouth, public notice was given to the *friends of liberty* to attend her *funeral*—a coffin was prepared, upon which was inscribed in large letters the word *Liberty*. This was followed by a numerous procession, while the bells were tolling and minute guns were firing, to the grave. There an oration was pronounced, in which it was hinted, that the *deceased* might possibly *revive*. The coffin was then disinterred, the word *Revived* conspicuously added to the inscription, after which the bells rang a merry peal. Printers boldly printed and circulated their papers, without the required stamp. Associations were formed from Maine to the Mississippi, entitled the “Sons of Liberty,” composed of the talent and wealth of the people; pledging their fortunes and their lives to *defend the liberty of the press*, and put down the stamp-act. The scheme of continental alliance, which afterwards followed, sprang from these associations. Nor were the males alone patriotic—females of the highest rank, and bred to luxurious ease, became members in all the colonies, of societies, resolving to forego luxuries, and to card, spin, and weave their own clothing. Fair reader! a suit of home-spun, was then a mark of popular distinction. Such was the spirit of opposition, to a favorite measure of the British ministry. Parliament again convened in January, 1766; when a multitude of petitions, from all parts of England and America, were presented for the repeal of the stamp-act. Some changes had taken place in the English Cabinet, more favorable to the colonial



cause, but Mr. Grenville still retained a place in it. After the speech of the King had been read, Mr. Pitt, the great champion of equal rights, occupied the floor. He briefly censured the acts of the late ministry, after which he thus expressed himself.

“It is a long time, Mr. Speaker, since I have attended in Parliament: when the resolution was taken in this House to tax America, I was ill in bed. If I could have endured to have been carried in my bed, so great was the agitation of my mind for the consequences, I would have solicited some kind hand to have laid me down on this floor, to have borne my testimony against it. *It is my opinion, that this kingdom has no right to lay a tax upon the colonies.* At the same time, I assert the authority of this kingdom to be sovereign and supreme in every circumstance of government and legislation whatsoever. Taxation is no part of the governing or legislative power; the taxes are a voluntary gift and grant of the Commons alone. The concurrence of the Peers and the Crown is necessary only as a *form* of law. This House represents the commons of Great Britain. When in this House we give and grant, therefore, we give and grant what is our own, but *can we give and grant the property of the Commons of America?* It is an absurdity in terms. There is an idea in some, that the colonies are virtually represented in this House. I would fain know by *whom?* The idea of *virtual representation* is the *most contemptible* that ever entered into the head of man:—It does not deserve a serious refutation. The commons in America, represented in their several Assemblies, have invariably exercised this constitutional right of giving and granting their own money; they would have been *slaves* if they had not enjoyed it. At the same time this kingdom has ever professed the power of legislation and commercial control. The colonies acknowledge your authority in all things, with the sole exception that you shall not take their money out of their pockets without their consent. Here would I draw the line—*quam ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum*”—[right forbids you to go beyond or fall short of it.]

Mr. Grenville, the prime mover of all the mischief, arose to defend his measures. He compared the tumults in America to an open rebellion—said he feared the doctrine that day promulgated would lead to *revolution*. He justified the right of taxing the colonies, &c. Said he—

“Protection and obedience are reciprocal. Great Britain protects America, America is therefore bound to yield obedience. If not, tell me, when were the Americans emancipated? The seditious spirit of the colonies, *owes its birth to the factions in this House.* We were told we trod on tender ground; we were bid to

expect disobedience; what is this but telling America to stand out against the law? To encourage their obstinacy with the expectation of support here? *Ungrateful people of America!* The nation has run itself into an immense debt to give them protection; bounties have been extended to them; in their favor the act of navigation has been relaxed: and now that they are called upon to contribute a small share towards the public expense, they renounce your authority, insult your officers, and break out, I might almost say, into open rebellion."

Mr. Grenville took his seat, and Mr. Pitt, with permission of the House, rose, with indignation visible in his countenance, to reply.

"Sir," [addressing the Speaker,] "a charge is brought against gentlemen sitting in this House, for giving birth to sedition in America. The freedom with which they have spoken their sentiments against this *unhappy act*, is imputed to them as a crime; but the imputation shall not discourage me. It is a liberty which I hope no gentleman will be afraid to exercise; it is a liberty by which the gentleman who calumniates it, might have profited. *He ought to have desisted from his project.* We are told America is obstinate—America is almost in open rebellion. Sir, *I rejoice that America has resisted.* Three millions of people so dead to all the feelings of liberty, as voluntarily to submit to be slaves, would have been fit instruments to have made slaves of all the rest." [After a very happy reply to some old law passages cited by Mr. Grenville; he thus continued]—" 'When,' said the honorable gentleman, 'were the colonies emancipated?' At what time, say I in answer, were they made slaves? I speak from accurate knowledge when I say, that the profits to Great Britain from the trade of the colonies, through all its branches, is two millions per annum. This is the fund which carried you triumphantly through the war; this is the price America pays you for her protection; and shall a miserable financier come with a boast that he can fetch a pepper-corn into the exchequer, at the loss of millions to the nation? I know the valor of your troops—I know the skill of your officers—I know the force of this country; but in such a cause your success would be hazardous. America if she fell, would fall like the strong man: *she would embrace the pillars of the State and pull down the Constitution with her.* Is this your boasted peace? Not to sheathe the sword in the scabbard, but to sheathe it in the bowels of your countrymen? The Americans have been wronged; they have been driven to madness by injustice. Will you punish them for the madness you have occasioned? No: let this country be the first to resume its prudence and temper; I will pledge myself for the colonies, that on their part animosity and resentment will cease. The system of policy I would earnestly adopt in

relation to America, is happily expressed in the words of a favorite poet :

“ Be to her faults a little blind,  
Be to her virtues very kind,  
Let all her ways be unconfined  
And clap your padlock on her mind.”

Upon the whole I beg leave to tell the House, in a few words, what is really my opinion. It is *that the stamp-act be repealed, ABSOLUTELY, TOTALLY AND IMMEDIATELY.*

In addition to the information contained in the numerous petitions laid before Parliament, Doct. Franklin was called to the bar, and questioned freely as to the real state of feeling existing in the colonies towards the act. By a division of the House a large majority were in favor of not enforcing ; and shortly after a bill passed for repealing the law. The news of its repeal produced joy throughout England and America. Illuminations and decorations took place in the former, while in the latter country, public thanksgivings were offered in the churches—non-importation resolutions rescinded, and the home-spun apparel given to the poor. The difficulty between the two countries would soon have been healed, had not the repeal of the stamp-act been followed with the “ *Declaratory Act,*” which was, “ that Parliament have, and of right ought to have, *power to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever.*” In this the *right to tax* was still maintained : in addition to this probe to open the wound anew, a law remained unrepealed, which directed that whenever troops should be marched into any of the colonies, necessary articles should be provided for them *at the expense of the colony.* The Assembly of New York refused obedience to this law, and Parliament, to punish that body, suspended its authority. The alarm occasioned by this act, considered by the people despotic, had not time to die away, before a new and aggravated cause of grievance was added, by the passage of a law imposing duties on the importation of *glass, tea,* and other enumerated articles, into the colonies, provision by the act being made for the appointment of commissioners of the customs, to be dependent solely on the Crown. About the same time Gov. Bernard of Massachusetts who had received private in-

structions to see that the colony made provision to remunerate the losses of those who had honored the stamp-act, being already very unpopular with the people, assumed, in his message to the Assembly, a tone of haughty reproach. This message produced a sarcastic and indignant reply. From this time the friends of liberty daily increased, and the court party correspondingly declined. The joy felt in the colonies for the repeal of the stamp-act, was of very short duration. The non-importation agreements were revived—looms and cards once more set to work—the spinning-wheel, the *piano* of the times, was heard buzzing in the dwellings of the rich—articles of domestic manufacture became again, with *patriots*, the fashion of the day—petitions and remonstrances were drawn up and circulated—and India tea, yielded its place on the tables of its fond drinkers, to a decoction of sassafras, sage, or a glass of cold water.

In 1768, troops were stationed in New York and Boston, to awe the people into submission to the acts of Parliament. Early in the same year, Massachusetts addressed a *circular letter* to the legislatures of the sister colonies, to have them unite in advising what course it was best to pursue. A series of essays, published in a Philadelphia newspaper at this period, entitled, "Letters from a farmer in Pennsylvania to the inhabitants of the British Colonies," from the pen of that enlightened patriot, John Dickinson, Esq., augmented the spirit of *union*. In 1769, resolutions were adopted in Parliament reprobating in strong terms the conduct of the people of Massachusetts, and directing that pliant tool of oppression, Governor Bernard, to make strict inquiry into all treasonable acts committed in that province since 1767, that persons thus guilty might have their offences investigated, and their fate decided upon *within the realm of Great Britain*.

The House of Burgesses of Virginia, which met shortly after, adopted, with closed doors, from fear of being prorogued by the Governor, resolutions expressive of their sense of the injustice and unconstitutionality of transporting criminals for trial among strangers, believing it to be *highly derogatory to the rights of British subjects*. Soon after this public manifestation of popular



displeasure, the general court of Massachusetts convened at Cambridge, the public buildings in Boston being filled at that time with British soldiers. Governor Bernard wished them to provide funds to defray the expenses of quartering his Majesty's troops—no notice, however, was taken of the request : and he shortly after left the province—unhonored and unlamented. He had for some time been a pliant tool for the British ministry, and his system of espionage had won for him the curses of the *Union*, which was then forming. Had the colonies been governed by men who were more willing to redress known grievances, and less anxious to please a ministry three thousand miles distant, it is possible the separation of the colonies from the mother country might have been delayed, if not prevented. Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, it should be observed, was an exception to the general rule.

Nothing occurred in 1769, to avert the impending storm. The mass of the people, in the mean time, were properly investigating the *causes* which were agitating the country, and which were fast approaching a crisis. Non-importation agreements were now assuming a form, and producing an effect which told on the mother country. In June of that year, delegates from the several counties in Maryland met at Annapolis and adopted spirited resolves : in one of which they took measures to secure to the country the article of wool, by agreeing not to kill any *ewe lambs*.

The troops quartered in New York and Boston were a constant source of irritation and difficulty with the inhabitants. On the second day of March, 1770, a quarrel took place at Boston, between a British soldier and a man employed at a rope-walk. This quarrel was renewed by the citizens on the evening of the fifth, when a part of Captain Preston's company, after having been pelted with snow-balls, derided, and dared to, fired upon the multitude, killing three and wounding five others. The ringing of bells, the beating of drums and the shout *to arms!* by the people, soon brought together thousands of citizens. A body of troops, sent in the mean time to rescue Preston's men, would doubtless have been massacred, had not Governor Hutchinson and some of the leading citizens, among whom was Samuel Adams,



interfered. The Governor promised that the matter should be amicably adjusted in the morning ; and the mob dispersed. The anniversary of this first martyrdom in the cause of American liberty, was celebrated by the Bostonians until the close of the war. The immortal Warren delivered two of the anniversary orations. In the first, which he delivered in 1772, on alluding to the events of that memorable evening, he thus speaks :

“ When we beheld the authors of our distress parading in our streets, or drawn up in a regular *battalia*, as though in a hostile city, our hearts beat to arms ; we snatched our weapons, almost resolved, by one decisive stroke, to avenge the death of our *slaughtered* brethren, and to secure from future danger, all that we held most dear : but propitious heaven forbade the bloody carnage, and saved the threatened victims of our too keen resentment, not by their discipline, not by their regular array,—no, it was royal *George's* livery that proved their shield—it was that which turned the pointed engines of destruction from their breasts.” [In a note of reference to the forgoing extract, he thus adds:] “ I have the strongest reason to believe that I have mentioned the only circumstance which saved the troops from destruction. It was then and now is the opinion of those who were best acquainted with the state of affairs at that time, that had thrice that number of troops, belonging to any power at open war with us, been in this town, in the same exposed condition, scarce a man would have lived to have seen the morning light.”

Three days after the massacre, the obsequies were solemnized. Every demonstration of respect was manifested. The stores and work-shops were closed—the bells of Boston, Charlestown and Roxbury were tolled, and thousands followed the remains to their final resting place. The bodies were all deposited in one vault. This unhappy event and its annual observance, tended greatly to widen the breach between the colony of Massachusetts and the mother country. In New York, quarrels also arose between the citizens and soldiers. Liberty poles, erected by the former, were cut down by the latter.

While such events were transpiring, an attempt was made in England to repeal the laws for raising a revenue in America. The duties were removed from all articles except *tea*, it being thought necessary by Parliament, to have at least one loaf constantly in the oven of discord. The repeal of a part of the obnoxious law

produced little effect in the colonies, except to modify the non-importation agreements so as to exclude only *tea* from the country ; and those patriots who had not before substituted, instead of tea, a cold water or herbaceous beverage, did now.

## CHAPTER VI.

The reader will perceive that the Revolution had, for several years, been progressively taking place: he is now approaching that period, when, by the clashing of steel, it was to be maintained.

In 1772, his Majesty's revenue cutter *Gaspee*, while giving chase to the *Providence*, a packet sailing into Newport, and suspected of dealing in contraband wares, ran aground in Providence river, and was burned by the merchants and citizens in the vicinity. This was a bold act, and the sum of *five hundred pounds* was offered for the discovery of the offenders, and full pardon to any one who would become state's evidence: but in this case, as in that of *Andre's* capture, gold had no influence.

In 1773, provinces not exposed to the acts of a *lawless soldiery*, were fast breathing the same spirit manifested by those which were: propitious gales wafted it to the remotest parts. The talented Patrick Henry, who made human nature and human events his study, prophesied, during this year, that the colonies would become *independent*. Virginia, in March of 1773, again took the lead in legislative resolves, against tyrannic oppression. The legislatures of New England and Maryland responded cordially to them. Governor Hutchinson of Massachusetts, who succeeded Mr. Bernard, by a system of espionage similar to that carried on by the latter, became to the people of that commonwealth very odious. During this year, standing committees were appointed in the colonial assemblies, to correspond with each other. At this period, town committees had been formed in almost every town in

some of the colonies, which had for their chief object, the speedy communication of important information, there being then but few printing presses in the country. Some time in this year, Doctor Franklin obtained in London several original letters, written by governor Hutchinson and others at Boston, to members of the British Parliament; stating that the opposition to the laws, were, in Massachusetts, confined to a few factious individuals: recommending at the same time, the abridging of colonial rights, and the adoption of more vigorous measures. These letters were transmitted to America, and their contents being soon known in every hamlet in New England, the popular indignation was greatly increased. The legislature of Massachusetts, in an address to his Majesty, demanded the recall of the governor and lieut. governor. This legislative proceeding was the cause of much opprobrium being cast upon Franklin in England.

Owing to the rigid observance of the non-importation resolves, the East India company now found their *tea* accumulating in vast quantities in their ware-houses. They were therefore under the necessity of petitioning Parliament for relief. Permission was granted them to import it on their own account: and they accordingly appointed consignees in several American sea-ports, and made heavy shipments to them. They intended, no doubt, to land it free of duty to the American merchant, but the law imposing the duty yet remained on the statute book of England; and the popular voice decided, that while the *right to tax* was maintained, the tea should not be landed. In Philadelphia, the consignees declined their appointment. In New York, hand-bills were circulated, threatening with ruin those who should vend tea; and warning pilots, at their peril, not to conduct ships into that port laden with the article. In Boston, inflammatory handbills were also circulated, but the consignees, being in favor with the governor, accepted their appointments. This excited the whole colony of Massachusetts, and enraged the citizens. In the mean time, several ships, containing thousands of chests, arrived on the coast. So determined were the people not to allow the tea to be landed, that ship after ship was compelled to return to England,

without unlading a single chest. Philadelphia took the lead, and was nobly sustained by New York. In Charleston, it was landed but not permitted to be sold. On the twenty-ninth of November, the *Dartmouth*, an East India ship, laden with tea, entered the harbor of Boston. At a numerous meeting of the citizens, held to consult on the course to be pursued, it was resolved, "that the tea should not be landed, that no duty should be paid, and that it should be sent back in the same vessel." To enforce the resolutions, a vigilant watch was organized to prevent its being secretly landed. The captain was notified to return with his cargo ; but Governor Hutchinson refused to sanction his return. In the mean time, other vessels, laden with tea, arrived there. On the sixteenth December, the citizens of Boston and vicinity assembled to determine what course to adopt. On the evening of that day, when it was known that the governor refused a pass for the vessels to return, a person in an Indian's dress gave the *war whoop* in the gallery of the Assembly room. At this signal, the people hurried to the wharves ; when a party of about twenty men, disguised as Mohawks, protected by thousands of citizens on shore, boarded the vessels, broke open and emptied the contents of *three hundred and forty-two* chests of tea into the ocean, without tumult or personal injury. What a tea party the fishes and sea-serpent must have had that night.

These violent proceedings greatly excited the displeasure of the British government. Early in 1774, an act was passed in Parliament, levying a fine on the town of Boston, as a compensation to the East India company for the tea destroyed the preceding December. About the same time, an act closing the port of Boston, and removing the custom house to Salem : and another depriving the colony of Massachusetts of her constitution and charter, were passed : and to cap the climax of oppression, a bill was introduced making provision for the trial in England, instead of that colony for capital offence ; which passed the same year. A few individuals strenuously opposed those measures, believing that the colonists would be driven to acts of desperation ; but they were passed by large majorities. When the bill for blockading the town of



Boston was under discussion in March of this year, Gov. Johnston, who opposed the measure, said in a speech on that occasion, "I now venture to predict to this house, that the effect of the present bill must be productive of a general confederacy, to resist the power of this country." Gen. Conway was again found the champion of equal rights, and when the bill was under discussion to destroy the chartered privileges of the colony, he closed a brief but pertinent speech with the following sentence: "These acts respecting America, will *involve* this country and its ministers in *misfortunes*, and, I wish I may not add, in *ruin*." It has often been asserted that the whole bench of Bishops in England, who are legally constituted members of Parliament, were in favor of forcing the colonies to submit to the unwise acts of the mother country. As there was one most honorable exception, I take pleasure in making it more generally known. The Rev. Dr. Jonathan Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph, was the nobleman to whom I allude. When the bill for altering the charter of the colony of Massachusetts was under discussion, he prepared a speech replete with wisdom, and containing the most convincing proofs, that the British government were in the wrong and were pursuing a course illy calculated to bring the colonies again to prove profitable to England. He showed the evil of making the governors dependent on the crown, instead of the governed, for support. Said he :

Your ears have been open to the governors and shut to the people. This must necessarily lead us to countenance the jobs of interested men, under the pretence of defending the rights of the crown. But the people are certainly the best judges whether they are well governed ; and the crown can have no rights inconsistent with the happiness of the people." [Speaking of the act of taxation, he said :] " If it was unjust to tax them, [the Americans] we ought to repeal it for their sakes ; if it was unwise to tax them, we ought to repeal it for our own." [He exhibited the fact that the whole revenue raised in America in 1772, amounted only to *eighty-five* pounds.] " Money that is earned so dearly as this [said he] ought to be expended with great wisdom and economy. My lords, were you to take up but one thousand pounds more from North America upon the same terms, the nation itself would be a bankrupt." [He added, in another place :] " It is a strange idea we have taken up, to cure their resentments, by increasing their provocations, to remove the effects of our own ill conduct, by

multiplying the instances of it. But the spirit of blindness and infatuation has gone forth. \* \* \* Recollect that the Americans are men of like passions with ourselves, and think how deeply this treatment must affect them."

The able and argumentive speech of the learned Bishop, which was not delivered in the House for want of an opportunity, was published soon after, but, as he had anticipated, "not a word of it was regarded." While the *declaratory bill* of the sovereignty of Great Britain over the colonies was under discussion, in March, Mr. Pitt, then lord Chatham, again opposed the principle of taxation without representation, and closed an animated speech as follows :

"The forefathers of the Americans did not leave their native country, and subject themselves to every danger and distress, to be reduced to a state of *slavery* : they did not give up their rights ; they looked for *protection*, and not for *chains*, from their mother country ; by her they expected to be defended in the possession of their property, and not to be deprived of it ; for should the present power continue, there is nothing they can call their own ; or, to use the words of Mr. Locke, ' what property have they in that which another may by right take, when he pleases, to himself ? ' "

The news in the colonies of the passage of the unjust laws above mentioned, carried with it gloom and terror. The better informed saw the approaching contest, yet firmly resolved to live or die *freemen*. From the north to the south the same spirit was manifested, and the kindest sympathy felt for the Bostonians, who were considered as suffering in the cause of *liberty*. The first day of June, when the Boston *port-bill* began to operate, was observed in most of the colonies as a day of fasting and prayer.

Governor Hutchinson of Massachusetts was recalled early in 1774, and General Gage appointed his successor ; but the interests of the people found no material benefit from this change of rulers. On the 17th of June, the general court of Massachusetts, at the suggestion of a committee in Virginia, recommended the calling of a *Congress* at Philadelphia, on the first Monday of the following September. At a numerous meeting of the inhabitants of the city of New York, convened in an open field on the sixth

of July, with Alexander McDougal in the chair, a series of spirited resolutions were adopted, among which was the following :

“ *Resolved*, That any attack or attempt to abridge the liberties, or invade the constitution of any of our sister colonies, is immediately an attack upon the liberties and constitution of all the other British colonies.”

About this time, the motto, “ *United we stand, divided we fall !*” originated in Hanover, Virginia ; while almost at the same instant the motto, “ *Join or die !*” had its origin in Rhode Island. On the first day of September, the following circumstance gave a new impulse to the spirit of independence in the colony of Massachusetts. Gov. Gage had ordered a military force to take possession of the powder in the provincial arsenal at Charlestown, near Boston. It was rumored abroad, that the British fleet in the harbor were bombarding the town, and *thirty thousand* men, in less than two days, mostly armed, were on their way to Boston. Another circumstance took place in that city, about the same time, which added oil to the lamp of liberty. Gov. Gage deprived John Hancock of his commission as colonel of cadets ; a volunteer body of governor’s guards. The company took offence at the act, and instantly disbanded themselves. The late governors, Bernard and Hutchinson, repeatedly represented to the British ministry, that the colonies could never form a *union*. They had hoped as much, and taken no little pains to prevent such an event ; but when the fifth of September arrived, delegates from *twelve* of the thirteen colonies met in convention, Georgia alone excepted : she soon after joined the confederacy. Peyton Randolph, of Virginia, was chosen president, and Charles Thompson, of Pennsylvania, secretary of this body. Patrick Henry was the first to address the meeting. While in session, this Congress passed resolutions, approving the course of the citizens of Boston—opposing the acts of Parliament—advising union, peaceable conduct, etc. They remonstrated with General Gage against fortifying Boston Neck—recommended a future course to be pursued by the colonies—setting forth clearly the present evils, their causes and remedies. They advised economy and frugality—the abstaining

from all kinds of intemperance, festivities, and the like—requiring committees to report all the enemies of American liberty, that their names might be published. They also addressed a petition to the king—a memorial to the citizens of England—an address to the people of the colonies—and another to the French inhabitants of Quebec, Georgia, Nova Scotia, and other British provinces not represented. In their petition to the king, they simply asked to be restored to their situation in the peace of 1763, in humble, strong and respectful terms. They urged the colonies “to be prepared for every contingency.” They invited the co-operation of the British colonies not represented in that congress, in their resistance to oppression; and adjourned on the twenty-sixth of October, after a session of *fifty-two* days, to meet again on the tenth of the following May. Says *Mr. Allan*, author of the *American Revolution* :

“That an assembly of fifty-two men, born and educated in the wilds of a new world, unpractised in the arts of polity, most of them unexperienced in the arduous duties of legislation, coming from distant colonies and distant governments, differing in religion, manners, customs and habits, as they did in their views with regard to the nature of their connexion with Great Britain—that such an assembly, so constituted, should display so much wisdom, sagacity, foresight and knowledge of the world, such skill in argument, such force of reasoning, such firmness and soundness of judgment, so profound an acquaintance with the rights of man, such elevation of sentiment, such genuine patriotism, and above all, such unexampled union of opinion—was indeed a political phenomenon, to which history has yet furnished no parallel.”

The resolves of Congress were strictly observed, by all the thirteen colonies, a system of commercial non-intercourse with the mother country was maintained, and the militia were drilled and preparations made for any emergency. In December following, Maryland alone resolved to raise £10,000, for the purchase of arms and ammunition for her defence. In January, 1775, colonial difficulties were the cause of warm discussions, in both Houses of the mother government. On a motion for an address to his Majesty, to give immediate orders for removing his troops from Boston, Lord Chatham delivered a powerful speech. He asserted



that the measures of the preceding year, which had placed their American affairs in so alarming a state, were founded upon misrepresentation—that instead of its being only a faction in Boston, as they had been told, who were opposed to their unlawful government, it was, in truth, the whole continent. Said he,

“When I urge this measure for recalling the troops from Boston, I urge it on this pressing principle—that it is necessarily preparatory to the restoration of your prosperity.” [He termed the troops under General Gage,] “an army of impotence—and irritation—I do not mean to censure the inactivity of the troops. It is a prudent and necessary inaction. But it is a miserable condition, where disgrace is prudence; and where it is necessary to be contemptible. Woe be to him who sheds the first, the unexpiable drop of blood in an impious war, with a people contending in the great cause of public liberty. I will tell you plainly, my lords, no son of mine, nor any one over whom I have influence, shall ever draw his sword upon his fellow subjects.” [He stated, that from authentic information he knew that the whole continent was uniting, and not commercial factions, as had been asserted. Speaking of the principles which united the Americans, he said,]—“’Tis liberty to liberty engaged, that they will defend themselves, their families and their country. In this great cause they are immovably allied. *It is the alliance of God and nature*—immutable, eternal, fixed as the firmament of Heaven. When your lordships look at the papers transmitted us from America, when you consider their decency, firmness and wisdom, you can not but respect their cause and wish to make it your own—for myself I must declare and avow that, in all my reading and observation, and it has been my favorite study—I have read Thucydides, and have studied and admired the master states of the world—that for solidity and reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of different circumstances, no nation or body of men can stand in preference to the General Congress at Philadelphia. I trust it is obvious to your lordships, that all attempts to impose servitude on such men, to establish despotism over such a mighty continental nation—must be vain—must be futile. To conclude, my lords, if the ministers thus persevere in misadvising and misleading the King, I will not say that they can alienate his subjects from his crown, but I will affirm that they will make the crown not worth his wearing. I shall not say that the King is betrayed, but I will pronounce *that the kingdom is undone*.”

Lord Chatham was nobly sustained by Lord Cambden, but they were of a small minority, and their reasoning was buried in the popular will of that immortal mortal, Lord North. A favorite measure of the latter gentleman, for healing the dissensions



in the colonies was adopted, which was in substance, that if any colony would consent to tax itself for the benefit of the mother country, Parliament would forbear to tax that colony, as long as the contribution was punctually paid. One would suppose that head *brainless* that looked for a very beneficial result from the passage of such a law. In March of this year, the celebrated Edmund Burke delivered a long and able speech in Parliament in favor of conciliating colonial difficulties—but to no purpose. An effort was made by the British ministry, when they found the Americans uniting, to create a separation of interest, and prevent a union of the northern and southern, by conciliating the middle colonies, but without effect: the motto, *United we stand*, had gone forth, and no political manouvering could annual it. At this period, there were not a few in the colonies, who, from reverence, timidity or sinister motives, clung to the authority of the mother country. The most of those, however, were recent immigrants from England and Scotland, and a multitude of officers dependent on the Crown and its authority, for a continuance of kingly honors. These adherents to British authority were called *Tories*, and the friends of liberty and equal rights were called *Whigs*; names originated many years before in England. To compel New England to submit to the acts of Parliament, they were prohibited, in the course of this year, from fishing on the banks of Newfoundland; and armed vessels were sent to enforce the law. This prohibition was severely felt, as several colonies were extensively engaged in that business.

The storm which had so long been gathering over this continent, was now about to descend in all its fury. On the 19th day of April, 1775, Gen. Gage sent from Boston a detachment of 8 or 900 troops, under the command of Col. Smith and Maj. Pitcairn, to destroy a collection of military stores, accumulated at Concord by the friends of *liberty*. At Lexington, a small village which they had to pass, a company of sixty or seventy militia were paraded near the village church. Maj. P. riding forward, exclaimed, *Disperse, you rebels—throw down your arms and disperse!* The militia hesitated, and the Maj. firing a pistol, ordered

a company under Capt. Parker, to fire upon them: the command was obeyed, and eight were killed and several wounded. The militia dispersed, and the troops marched on to Concord. Some of the stores had been removed, what remained were destroyed. The minute men of that town had assembled before the arrival of the regulars, but being too weak to oppose the latter, retired on their approach. As the report of the firing upon the militia at Lexington spread with almost lightning rapidity, from the ringing of bells, firing of signal guns, &c., the country was soon in arms. Finding themselves reinforced, the Concord militia advanced, and a skirmish ensued, in which several were killed on both sides. The British troops, seeing that they were to have hot work, as almost every male citizen between the ages of *ten and eighty* were arming for the fight, began to retreat. In their course they were fired upon from all manner of concealments. Every stone-wall, tree, stump, rock, old barn or workshop, sent forth its unerring bullet into the ranks of the enemy. Had not the British been reinforced by about 900 men under Lord Percy, few of the first detachment would ever have reached Boston alive. The British loss in this battle, called the battle of Lexington because it commenced and much of it was fought in that town, in killed wounded and prisoners, was 273; and that of the Provincials, 87. General Gage had thought, previous to the battle of Lexington, that five regiments of British infantry could march from Maine to Georgia. Possibly he had entered the right school, to learn how to appreciate American valor with more certainty. Thus closed the opening scene of a tragedy, destined to last *eight* long years. The news of this battle spread rapidly through the New England provinces. The plow was left in the furrow—the chisel in the mortice—the iron in the forge; and the hand that had placed it there, grasped the missile of death, and hastened to the vicinity of Boston. In a few days, a large army was assembled under the command of Generals Ward of Massachusetts, and Putnam of Connecticut, and closely invested the town.

While matters stood thus, in and around Boston, a plan for

the capture of the fortresses of Ticonderoga, Crown Point and Skeenesborough, now Whitehall, commanding the route of intercommunication between the colonies and Canada; was conceived and boldly executed. The fortresses were all surprised and captured, as was a sloop of war near the outlet of Lake George, without bloodshed, by colonels Ethan Allen, and Seth Warner, with two hundred and thirty Green Mountain boys, and officers Dean, Wooster, Parsons, and Arnold, and forty other brave spirits of Connecticut. On the evening of the 10th of May, as the invaders approached Ticonderoga, a sentinel snapped his gun at Colonel Allen and retreated, followed by the latter and his brave comrades. On gaining possession of the fortress, the commander was found napping. Colonel Allen demanded of him the immediate surrender of the fort. "By what authority, sir?" It is possible the thought may not have entered the mind of the rebel chieftain, that such a question would be propounded; but his fruitful genius instantly prompted the following, singular, and laconic reply—"In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress." As may be supposed, the summons was from too high a power to be resisted.

A minute account of the battle of Lexington, with depositions to prove that the British troops shed the first blood, were transmitted without delay to England, by the provincial legislature of Massachusetts then in session; closing with the following sentence: *Appealing to Heaven for the justice of our cause, we determine to die, or be free.* The Colonial Congress again assembled, on the very day their authority had been so successfully anticipated, by the intrepid Allen at Ticonderoga. Preparations at this time, were every where being made in the colonies, for the maintenance of the stand taken against oppression, by a resort to arms. A new impulse seemed given to the spirit of opposition, by the defeat of the British troops at Lexington, and the capture of the northern military posts; but a majority of Congress, had not as yet formed the resolve, to aim at a final separation from the mother country. John Hancock, in consequence of his having been proscribed by the British government, was

chosen president of this Congress. As military preparations were making, a resort to arms had commenced, and it was pretty evident that others must follow; Congress saw the necessity of giving to those preparations a head, and most fortunately appointed THE WORLD'S MODEL MAN—GEORGE WASHINGTON, to that honorable post. He received the appointment of commander-in-chief while a member of Congress, on the 22d of May, and began immediately to prepare for his laborious duties. He arrived at the American camp on the 3d day of July. Georgia having sent delegates to the Congress of 1775, all the colonies were then represented.

Early in June, several transports filled with troops under the command of generals Howe, Clinton and Burgoyne, arrived at Boston. On the 17th, the battle of Breed's, now called Bunker's hill, was fought. An intrenchment was thrown up on the preceding evening, by a body of one thousand men under Colonel Prescott. The intention was to have fortified Bunker's hill, but the officers sent to throw up the redoubt, found that less tenable, and built the fortification on Breed's hill. Ground was broken at twelve o'clock at night, and by daylight a redoubt had been thrown up eight rods square. In the morning, a reinforcement of five hundred men was sent to their assistance. Although a heavy cannonading was kept up from daylight by the British shipping, the Americans, encouraged by General Putnam and other brave officers, did not cease their labors. About noon, General Gage, astonished at the boldness of the American militia, sent a body of three thousand regulars, under Generals Howe and Pigot, to storm the works. Generals Clinton and Burgoyne, took a station in Boston, where they had a commanding view of the hill. The towers of the churches—the roofs of the houses—indeed every eminence in and around Boston, was covered with anxious spectators; many of whom had dear relatives exposed to the known danger, awaiting with almost breathless anxiety the deadly conflict. Many, and heart-felt were the prayers then offered up, for the success of the patriot band. About the time the action commenced, General Warren, who was president of the

Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, joined the Americans on the hill as a *volunteer*. The British troops, having landed from their boats, marched to attack the works. The Americans, reserving their fire *until the white of the eye was visible*, then opened a most destructive one, dealing death on every hand. Indeed, rank after rank was cut down, like grass before the mower. The enemy wavered, and soon retreated in disorder down the hill. Then might doubtless have been heard a stifled murmur of applause, among the eye witnesses in Boston, who believed their countrymen fighting a just cause. And then too, might have been seen the lip of the British officer and rank tory, compressed with anger and mortification. While this attack was in progress, the fire-brand of the licensed destroyer, by the diabolical order of Gen. Gage, was communicated to the neighboring village of Charlestown, containing some six hundred buildings, and the whole in a short time were reduced to ashes; depriving about two thousand inhabitants of a shelter, and destroying property amounting to more than half a million of dollars. The British officers with much difficulty, again rallied their troops, and led them a second time to the attack. They were allowed to approach even nearer than before; when the Americans, having witnessed the conflagration of Charlestown, themselves burning to revenge the houseless mother and orphan, sent the messenger of death among their ranks. The carnage became a second time too great for the bravery of the soldier—the ranks were broken, and the enemy again retreated, some even taking refuge in the boats. When the British troops wavered a second time, Clinton, vexed at their want of success, hastened to their assistance with a reinforcement. On his arrival, the men were again rallied, and compelled, by the officers, who marched in their rear with drawn swords, to renew the attack. At this period of the contest, the ammunition of the Americans failed, and the enemy entered the redoubt. Few of the former had bayonets, yet for a while they continued the unequal contest with clubbed muskets, but were finally overpowered. The American loss in numbers, was inconsiderable until the enemy scaled the works. They



were forced to retreat over Charlestown Neck, a narrow isthmus which was raked by an incessant fire from several floating batteries. Fortunately, few were killed in crossing the Neck. The following anecdote is characteristic of Bunker bravery: While the Americans were retreating from the hill across Charlestown Neck, Timothy Cleveland, of Canterbury, Ct., was marching with others with trailed arms, when a grape shot struck the small part of the breech of his gun-stock, and cut it off. He had proceeded several rods before he was aware of his loss—but ran back and picked it up, declaring, “*The damned British shall have no part of my gun.*” The gun-stock was repaired with a tin band, and was long after in the service of its patriotic owner, who was from the same county and under the command of Gen. Putnam.—*Joseph Simms*. The British loss in this, which was the first regular fought battle in the Revolution, was, in killed and wounded, *one thousand and fifty-four*, including many officers, among whom was Major Pitcairn of Lexington memory.\* The American loss in killed and wounded, *was four hundred and fifty-three*; and among the former was the talented, the kind-hearted and zealous patriot, Gen. Warren; who received a musket bullet through the head. He was a distinguished physician in Boston, and warmly espoused the cause of his country, and yielded his life a willing sacrifice in her defence; *undying be his memory in the American heart!*

What a scene of sublime grandeur must this battle have presented, to the citizens of Boston and the surrounding hills! The roar of cannon and musketry—the clashing of steel, as hand to hand the foeman met—the groans of the wounded and dying—the shouts of the combatants—the dense cloud of smoke which enveloped the peninsula, lit up transversely by streams of death-boding fire—the sheet of flame and crash of burning buildings and falling towers at Charlestown—the intense anxiety of those interested for the safety of friends and their property—the proba-

\* For some further particulars relating to this battle, and the death of Pitcairn, see a sketch of the personal character of Gen. James Dana, inserted under Cobelskill.

ble effect of that day's transactions, on the future prosperity of the colonies—combined to render it one of the most thrilling spectacles mortal eye ever witnessed. The British trumpeted this battle as a victory. "If they call this a victory, how many such can the British army achieve without ruin?" asked the Americans.

The following anecdotes of the battle of Bunker's Hill, I find in a letter from Col. John Trumbull, the *artist*, to Daniel Putnam, a son of Gen. Israel Putnam, dated New York, March 30th, 1818. The letter is published in a reply of the latter to an unkind attack made by Gen. Dearborn, some time previous, in a public journal, in which the imputation of cowardice was cast upon the brave "Old Put"—*who always dared to lead where any dared to follow*. The writer, though a native of the same county in which the old hero died, never heard of but one act in his adventurous life which evinced a want of judgment, and that was far from a cowardly one. It was that of his "entering a cavern to kill a wolf, and leaving his gun outside," until he entered a second time.

Says Trumbull:

"In the summer of 1786, I became acquainted, in London, with Col. John Small, of the British army, who had served in America many years, and had known General Putnam intimately during the war of Canada from 1756 to 1763. From him, I had the two following anecdotes respecting the battle of Bunker Hill: I shall nearly repeat his words. Looking at the picture which I had then almost completed, he said: 'I don't like the situation in which you have placed my old friend Putnam; you have not done him justice. I wish you would alter that part of your picture, and introduce a circumstance which actually happened, and which I can never forget. When the British troops advanced the second time to the attack of the redoubt, I, with the other British officers, was in front of the line to encourage the men: we had advanced very near the works undisturbed, when an irregular fire, like a *feu-de-joie*, was poured in upon us; it was cruelly fatal. The troops fell back, and when I looked to the right and left, I saw not one officer standing;—I glanced my eye to the enemy, and saw several young men leveling their pieces at me; I knew their excellence as marksmen, and considered myself gone. At that moment, my old friend Putnam rushed forward, and striking up the muzzles of their pieces with his sword, cried out, "For God's sake, my lads, don't fire at that man—I love him as I do my brother." We were so near

each other that I heard his words distinctly. He was obeyed ; I bowed, thanked him, and walked away unmolested.' ”

The other anecdote relates to the death of Gen. Warren :

“ At the moment when the troops succeeded in carrying the redoubt, and the Americans were in full retreat, Gen. Howe (who had been hurt by a spent ball, which bruised his ankle,) was leaning on my arm. He called suddenly to me : ‘ Do you see that elegant young man who has just fallen ? Do you know him ? ’ I looked to the spot towards which he pointed—‘ Good God, sir, I believe it is my friend Warren. ’ ‘ Leave me then instantly—run ; keep off the troops, save him if possible. ’ I flew to the spot : ‘ My dear friend, ’ I said to him, ‘ I hope you are not badly hurt. ’ He looked up, seemed to recollect me, smiled and died ! A musket-ball had passed through the upper part of his head. ”

The Congress which met in the summer of 1775, had not yet determined to throw off all allegiance to the British crown, and in July of that year, prepared a declaration of American grievances for the preceding ten years, with the causes which had led to them. They also drew up a respectful address to the King, in which they avowed boldly, that they were “ resolved to die free-men rather than live slaves. ” This Congress established a general post office and general hospital, and resolved to emit a paper currency. Its proceedings, however, effected nothing towards healing the difficulties with the mother country. In November, the House of Lords, at the motion of the duke of Richmond, met to interrogate ex-governor Penn, who had been two years governor of Pennsylvania. He stated, in reply to certain questions, that he had resided four years in the colonies—that he was personally acquainted with all the members of the American Congress—that the colonists were united—were, to considerable extent, prepared for war—could make powder, small arms and cannon—were more expert at ship-building than Europeans—and that if a formidable force was sent to America, the number of colonists who would be found to join it, would be too trivial to be of any consequence. The duke of Richmond then proposed the last petition of Congress to the King, as a base for a plan of accommodation, and urged the impossibility of ever conquering America, as the learned John Wilkes had emphatically done in

the House of Commons, the preceding February : but the motion was lost. In December, Mr. Hartley made an effort to have hostilities suspended : and in the following February, Mr. Fox attempted the same thing ; soon after which, the King, by a treaty with the Prince of Hesse Cassel, made an arrangement to hire sixteen thousand troops of that Prince, to aid in subduing his American subjects. It was urged in vain, that they were setting the example for the colonies to call in foreign aid. In March of 1776, the duke of Grafton made another ineffectual attempt to open the eyes of the King and ministry, after which war was considered as actually declared. It was thought by the *court party*, that one or two campaigns at most, would bring America in sack-cloth and ashes at the foot of the British throne.

In 1775, the colonies adopted a plain red flag. By a resolution of Congress, the flag of the United States, consisting of *thirteen* stars and *thirteen* stripes, was adopted June 14th, 1777. On the 13th January, 1794, two new states having been added to the compact, the stars and stripes were increased to *fifteen* each. In January, 1817, by an act of Congress, it was resolved that it should consist of *thirteen* stripes, and a star for every additional state.

If matters were every day becoming worse in England, in the latter part of the year 1775, and the early part of '76, they were assuming an aspect no more favorable to a reconciliation in the colonies. Many events had transpired after the battle of Bunker's hill, which served to feed the flame of discord. Lord Dunmore, governor of Virginia, had pursued a course which rendered him not only odious to a majority of the colonists, but which tended greatly to unite the anti-tea party. The governor of North Carolina, also proved himself to be a tool of the British ministry : while Governor Tryon, of New York, in his efforts to please his master, became so unpopular, that he was obliged, in the course of the year to follow the example of Gov. Dunmore, and seek personal safety on board of an armed vessel.

The British, in 1775, burnt Stonington in Connecticut, Bristol in Rhode Island, and Falmouth in Massachusetts ; and during the

same year, the colonists, in several expeditions, had conquered a good part of Canada. Lord Dunmore, governor of Virginia, had for some time been arming the slaves, and instigating them to imbrue their hands in the blood of their masters ; and on the first of January, 1776, he burnt Norfolk. On the 17th of March following, the British having been compelled to evacuate Boston, Washington entered it, to the great joy of its patriotic citizens. A fleet under Sir Peter Parker, with several thousand British and Hessian troops, arrived on the coast of America early that year. Sir Henry Clinton, after leaving Boston, intended to take possession of New York, but finding General Lee there to oppose him, he sailed with the British fleet to attack Charleston, South Carolina. Lee, learning his intentions, managed to arrive there before him, and prepare the city for an attack. A fort was quickly thrown up on Sullivan's Island, of palmetto trees and sand, commanding the entrance to the harbor.

On the 31st of May, the enemy under Commodore Parker and Sir Henry Clinton, attacked it with a strong force, but were repulsed with severe loss, by the troops under Col. *Moultrie*, whose name it afterwards bore. The conduct of two sergeants, *Jasper* and *McDonald*, deserves particular notice.

Says the biographer of Marion: "A ball from the enemy's ships carried away our flagstaff. Scarcely had the stars of liberty touched the sand, before Jasper flew and snatched them up and kissed them with great enthusiasm. Then having fixed them to the point of his spontoon, [a kind of spear,] he leaped upon the breast-work amidst the storm and fury of the battle, and restored them to their daring station—waving his hat at the same time and huzzaing, '*God save liberty and my country forever!*' A cannon shot from one of the enemy's guns entered a port-hole and dreadfully mangled McDonald, while fighting like a hero at his gun. As he was borne off in a dying state, he said to his comrades, "*Huzza, my brave fellows! I die, but don't let the cause of liberty die with me!*" The day after the action, many citizens of Charleston of the first rank of both sexes visited the fort, to tender in person their thanks for its gallant defence, and by it



their own protection. Among them was Gov. Rutledge, distinguished for his patriotic zeal and devotion to the cause of his country. In the presence of the regiment to which Jasper belonged, he loosed his own sword and presented it to him, tendering him at the time a commission. The brave sergeant with heart-felt thanks declined accepting the latter, *because he could not read*. Let parents who neglect to educate their children, consider well the reason this young man gave, for not accepting proffered honor. Nor was this a solitary case, hundreds of daring spirits in the course of the war, were obliged to decline for the *same reason* the laurels their own valor had won, and see them adorn the brow of their less meritorious brethren.

A Mrs. *Elliot*, (whose husband was colonel of artillery,) on the occasion above referred to, presented the regiment with a beautiful American standard, richly embroidered by her own hands. It was delivered to Jasper, who, on receiving it, declared he *never would part with in life*. He kept his promise; for some time after in an effort to bear off those colors in an attack on Savannah, he was mortally wounded. A short time before his death, he was visited by Major Horry. He spoke with freedom of his past life and future prospects, and dwelt with evident satisfaction on the virtues of his mother. How true it is, that mothers generally lay the foundation for man's future greatness—future happiness. The last moments of many a poor soldier and weather-beaten tar, have added their testimony to the fact, that lasting advice may generally be traced to the affectionate and pious mother. Jasper sent the sword presented him by Gov. Rutledge, to his father, as a dying memento of his own patriotism. He also left with Major Horry his tender regards for the Jones family,\* in whose fate he had, by a daring exploit, become

\* His acquaintance with the Joneses originated as follows:

In disguise, and accompanied by his trusty friend Newton, he visited a British post at Ebenezer, where they tarried several days. Before leaving, they learned that a party of ten or twelve American prisoners were confined there in irons, to be sent back to Savannah, from whence some of them had deserted the British service. The friends begged permission to see them, among whom were a Mr. Jones, his weeping wife, and smiling boy. The

interested; giving evidence in death, that a just reward attends the good deeds of the virtuous.

About the time the attack was made on Fort Moultrie, Congress appointed Dr. Franklin, Samuel Chase and Charles Carroll commissioners to carry addresses into Canada, but they affected very little; the Canadians being then, as they have ever since been, too loyal to appreciate *liberty*.

Early in May, 1776, Congress took measures to sound the colonies on the propriety of casting off all allegiance to the mother country. Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia, gave notice that on a future day he would move for a declaration of *Independence*. From the time of his notice the press proved a powerful auxiliary in the popular cause. Many essays and pamphlets were published and distributed on the subject, and one from the pen of Thomas Paine, entitled *Common Sense*, aided much in preparing public opinion to sanction the step about to be taken. On the 1st of July it was introduced, and the three following days it was ably discussed, when the vote was taken and six states were enrolled for and six against the declaration, and one equally divided. One of the delegates from Pennsylvania, it is said, was influenced to leave the House, and thus a majority of one vote in a committee

two friends were much interested in the fate of the Joneses, and soon after left the camp and retired to a neighboring wood, where they pledged their lives to rescue the prisoners or perish in the attempt. They remained in the British camp until the prisoners, under a guard of a sergeant, corporal, and eight soldiers set forward for Savannah. About two miles from the place of destination, Jasper and Newton secreted themselves near a spring, a little distance from the road, where the party soon after halted. Watching their opportunity, they sprang from their covert, and seizing two muskets that were resting against a tree, they shot two soldiers who were keeping guard, and reached them in time to strike down with clubbed muskets, two others who were in the act of taking up their arms. Seizing the two loaded guns they gained command of those left by five of the party near the road, and the other six surrendered themselves prisoners. The heroes liberated the captive Americans, and placing guns in their hands, after stripping the four dead soldiers, led the party in safety to the American garrison at Puryburg. When the affray at the spring commenced, Mrs. Jones fainted to the earth, but recovering and finding her husband and boy safe, she became frantic with joy, and viewing her deliverers in the light of angels, she called down heaven's blessings upon them.

of the whole, decided the fate of the declaration. Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman and R. R. Livingston were appointed to draft a Declaration of Independence. Each prepared one, but that of Jefferson was, with a few slight alterations, adopted, on the *fourth of July, 1776* ; and read as follows.

#### "THE UNANIMOUS DECLARATION OF THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

"When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect for the opinions of mankind requires, that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident—that all men are created equal ; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights ; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed ; that when any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate, that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes ; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies ; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former system of government. The history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

"He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

"He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation, till his assent should be obtained ; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

"He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature—a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

"He has called together legislative bodies, at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

"He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

"He has refused for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large, for their exercise; the state remaining, in the meantime, exposed to all the danger of invasion from without and convulsions within.

"He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states, for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others, to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

"He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

"He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

"He has erected a multitude of offices, and sent here swarms of officers to harrass our people, and eat out their substance.

"He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures.

"He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

"He has combined with others, to subject us to a jurisdiction, foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them by a mock trial, from punishment for any murder they should commit on the inhabitants of these states:

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing taxes on us without our consent:

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury:

For transporting us beyond seas, to be tried for pretended offences:

For abolishing the free system of English law in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies:

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments:

For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power, to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever:



“He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

“He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

“He is, at this time, transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries, to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun, with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

“He has constrained our fellow citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

“He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

“In every stage of these oppressions, we have petitioned for redress, in the most humble terms: our petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince whose character is thus marked, by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

“Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time, of attempts made by their legislature, to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connexions and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in necessity, which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind—enemies in war; in peace, friends.

“We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world, for the rectitude of our intentions, DO, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection



of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

Signed by order and in behalf of the Congress.

JOHN HANCOCK, *President.*

Attest. CHARLES THOMPSON, *Secretary.*

*New Hampshire.*

Josiah Bartlett,  
William Whipple,  
Matthew Thornton.

*Massachusetts Bay.*

Samuel Adams,  
John Adams,  
Robert Treat Paine,  
Elbridge Gerry.

*Rhode Island, &c.*

Stephen Hopkins,  
William Ellery.

*Delaware.*

Cæsar Rodney,  
Thomas M'Kean,  
George Read,

*Maryland.*

Samuel Chase,  
William Paca,  
Thomas Stone,  
Charles Carroll of Ca-  
rollton.

*Connecticut.*

Roger Sherman,  
Samuel Huntington,  
William Williams,  
Oliver Wolcott.

*New York.*

William Floyd,  
Philip Livingston,  
Francis Lewis,  
Lewis Morris.

*Virginia.*

George Wythe,  
Richard Henry Lee,  
Thomas Jefferson,  
Benjamin Harrison,  
Thomas Nelson, jr.  
Francis Lightfoot Lee,  
Carter Braxton.

*North Carolina.*

William Hooper,  
Joseph Hewes,  
John Penn.

*New Jersey.*

Richard Stockton,  
John Witherspoon,  
Francis Hopkinson,  
John Hart,  
Abraham Clark.

*Pennsylvania.*

Robert Morris,  
Benjamin Franklin,  
Benjamin Rush,  
John Morton,  
George Clymer,  
James Wilson,  
George Ross.

*South Carolina.*

Edward Rutledge,  
Thomas Heyward, jr.  
Thomas Lynch, jr.  
Arthur Middleton.

*Georgia.*

Button Gwinnett,  
Lyman Hall,  
George Walton.

## CHAPTER VII.

While the colonists along the sea-board were beginning to realize the horrors of war, most of the frontier settlers were spectators for a while—not idle ones however. There was a restless anxiety which reached the log tenement of the most distant pioneer. Committees of vigilance, whose duty it was to gather information relative to the portending storm, and prepare for the defence of the settlements, were organized in Tryon county as early as 1774. A council of safety was chosen in Schoharie not long after.

At an early period of the difficulties, an effort was made by the Schoharie settlers to get the Indians in their neighborhood to remain quiet, and let the colonies settle their own quarrel with the mother country. A meeting was held for that purpose at the old council ground in Middleburgh. Brant with several Mohawk chiefs is said to have been present, on which occasion a Mrs. Richtmyer, living in the vicinity, acted as interpreter. The Indians agreed to remain neutral or join the Americans, says an old citizen who was present at the time; but they were too fond of war to remain inactive, while the British government was urging them at once to take up arms.

Previous to the Revolution, a small castle had been erected for the natives at Brakabeen,\* on the west bank of the Schoharie, several miles above Wilder hook, to which many of them removed from the latter place. Near it they had a burying ground.

A deputation from the Schoharie tribe were present in August,

\* Brakabeen is the German word for *rushes*, and obtained from the unusual quantity of that plant found along the banks of the river at that place.

1775, when several commissioners met the chiefs of the Six Nations at the German Flats; and it is believed they were at Albany, where a subsequent meeting was held the same year, for the same purpose. At the time the Indians left the Mohawk valley to follow the fortunes of the Johnsons, the Schoharie Indians, who survived a pestilence, except two or three families, imitated their example, leaving the council grounds and green graves of their fathers.

*Brown* says, that while the Indians were assembled to treat with the commissioners of the Indian department, a contagious disease—which he calls yellow-fever—broke out amongst them, which carried them off in great numbers. That the survivors superstitiously supposed the *Great Spirit* was angry with them for not serving their king, or for hesitating about entering his service; and that consequently they joined the royalists and went to Canada.

*Warree*, an old Cherokee squaw, said to have been 105 years old, usually called the mother of the Schoharies, who was living at Brakabeen at the beginning of hostilities, took the prevailing epidemic in 1775, and died with it. This good old squaw who was familiarly called *Granny Warree*, was the second wife of Schenevas, a Schoharie chief, after whom Schenevas creek in Otsego county, was called.\* For several years before her

\* *Brown's* pamphlet originates the name of this stream from the following circumstance: Two Indians, Schenevas and son, were there in the winter on a hunt—a deep snow fell and they concluded to return home. After traveling some distance, they kindled a fire and tarried over night. The following morning they set forward on their journey, but the father became fatigued, and finally returned to the place from whence they had first started. The son, discovering his father had taken the back track, returned also, and found him seated by a fire which he had kindled. The son killed his father with a tomahawk, buried him in the snow and returned to Schoharie, since which time this stream has been called Schenevas creek.

At a personal interview, *Judge Brown* related the following tradition, which he believed true: A Schoharie chief named Schenevas, whom I suppose to have been the one killed at the Schenevas creek, was living in the lower part of Schoharie. His mother, an aged widow, was living with him. She was a quarrelsome old squaw—was very fretful, and often wished herself dead when in a fit of ill humor. Her son, getting out of patience with her, went to Lambert Sternberg and borrowed a shovel, with which he dug

death, she used to walk with *two canes*, a good example for the modern exquisite, while her hair, unconfined and white as the Alpine snow, floated loosely at the sport of the breeze. When she felt the prevailing malady stealing upon her, and witnessed its fatal effects upon many of her tribe, believing her days were numbered, she desired to be carried to the spot where her husband had died. She was universally beloved by the whole tribe, indeed by all the white citizens who knew her, and her request, although it subjected them to great inconvenience in their present difficulties, was readily complied with. She survived the journey but a day and two nights, and "was gathered to her fathers, to enter new hunting grounds." She was buried by her faithful warriors who had carried her the whole distance—fifteen or twenty miles—beside her departed husband, near the present residence of Mr. Collier.

It is a remarkable fact, that while a large part of the Schoharie Indians died of this contagious disease, not a single white citizen took it.

Who the first chosen council of safety were in Schoharie, I am unable to say. Johannes Ball, a thorough going Whig, was chairman of the committee from its organization to the end of the war. It consisted generally of six members, and underwent some changes to meet the exigencies of the times. The following persons it is believed were members in the course of the war: Joseph Borst, Joseph Becker, Peter Becker, Col. Peter Vrooman, who is said to have done most of the writing for the board, Lt. Col. Peter Zielie, Peter Swart, Wm. Zimmer of

a grave, in Sternberg's orchard. He then conducted his mother to it. *You have often wished yourself dead*, said he, *I have prepared your grave—you must die*. When she saw the open grave, and realized that she had been taken at her word, she was terrified and began to cry. The savage son told her she must not be a *baby*—that she was going to the *Great Spirit* who did not like babies. He then forced her into the grave—bade her lie down—and buried her alive. She struggled hard as the earth covered her, but, regardless of her entreaties, he stamped down the earth upon her, and closed up the grave. We could wish for poor human nature that those parental murders were mere fiction; but we have too much reason to believe them true—indeed history furnishes us with abundant evidence of inhuman atrocities in savage life.

Brakabeen, Wm. Dietz, Samuel Vrooman, Nicholas Sternberg, Adam Vrooman, George Warner of Cobelskill, and Jacob Zimmer of Foxes creek.

Mr. Ball, chairman of the Schoharie committee, had two sons, Peter and Mattice—who were both living in 1837, in the town of Sharon—who, with their father warmly espoused their country's cause; while another son, and his brother, Captain Jacob Ball—a leader among the tories at Beaverdam; and John Peter Ball, another relative, as warmly advocated that of the oppressor.

As appears by the ancient records preserved in the Secretary's office at Albany, a regiment of militia was organized for the "Schoharie and Duaneburgh districts," as the *fifteenth* regiment of New York militia, and commissions to its officers were issued and dated October 20, 1775. It was composed at first of only *three companies*, and as their members were not all well affected toward rebellion, and scattered over considerable territory, the reader will see their need of foreign assistance. The following is a list of officers to whom commissions were at first issued.

"Peter Vrooman, Col.; Peter W. Zielie, Lieut. Col.; Thomas Eckerson, Jr. 1st Maj.; Jost Becker, 2d Maj.; Lawrence Schoolcraft, Adjt.; Peter Ball, Qr. Master.

"*First Company*—George Mann, Capt.; Christian Stubragh, 1st Lieut.; John Dominick, 2d Lieut.; Jacob Snyder, Ensign.

"*Second Company*—Jacob Hager, Capt.; Martynus Van Slyck, 1st Lieut.; Johannes W. Bouck, 2d Lieut.; Johannes L. Lawyer, Ensign.

"*Third Company*—George Rechtmyer, Capt.; Johannes I. Lawyer, 1st Lieut.; Martynus W. Zielie, 2d Lieut.; Johannes Lawyer Bellinger, Ensign."

A small company of militia was afterwards organized in Cobelskill, under Capt. Christian Brown and Lieut. Jacob Borst, which was possibly attached to the Schoharie regiment.

On the 14th of June, 1776, I find by the Albany records, that Schoharie was represented in the "general committee chamber," by chairman Ball and Peter Becker, of the Schoharie council of safety. At a meeting of the New York State Committee of Safety, convened at Fishkill, October 9, 1776, the following resolution was adopted—



*“Resolved, That the persons hereafter mentioned, be appointed to purchase at the cheapest rate, in their several counties, all the coarse woollen cloth, linsey woolsey, blankets, woollen hose, mittens, coarse linen, felt hats, and shoes fitting for soldiers; and that they have the linen made up into shirts.”* [The committee named for Albany county were]—“Capt. John A. Fonda, of the manor of Livingston; Peter Van Ness, of Claverack; Barent Van Beuren, of Kinderhook; Isaac V. Arnum, of Albany; Cors. Cuyler, of Schenectada; James McGee and Henry Quackenboss, of the manor of Rantselear; Anthony Van Bergen, of Cocsakie; Henry Oothout, of Katskill; and Johannes Ball, of Schoharie; and that the sum of 100 pounds be advanced to each of them for purchasing the above articles.”

The following oath of allegiance was found among the papers of the late Chairman Ball—

“You shall swear by the holy evangelist of the Almighty God, to be a true subject to our continental resolve and Provincial Congress and committees, in this difficulty existing between Great Britain and America, and to answer upon such questions as you shall be examined in, so help you God.

“Derrick Laraway appeared and swore the above mentioned, before the chairman and committee, at Schoharie, and signed the association, on the 30th day of June, in the year 1776.”

The following papers are copied from a record made by *Judge Swart* some years before his death. They were obtained through the politeness of the late Gen. Jacob Hager, and although they exhibit personal services, as they will throw some light on Schoharie affairs in the Revolution, I give them an insertion.

*“Names of the Persons that made resistance in 1777, against McDonald and his Party.”*

The Hager Family.*	Peter Zielie, jr.	Storm Becker jr.
Peter Vrooman, [Col.]	Thomas Eckerson,	John H. Becker,
Jonas Vrooman,	Thomas Eckerson jr.	John I. Becker,
Peter Swart, [after-	[Maj.]	David Becker,
wards judge,]	George Richtmyer,	Albertus Becker,
Peter A. Vrooman,	Cornelius Van Dyck,	Peter Zielie, [Lt. Col.]
Peter Powlus Swart,	Tunis Eckerson,	Peter Van Slyck,
Abraham Becker,	Cornelius Eckerson,	Martinus Zielie,
John A. Becker,	Hendrick Becker,	Peter Becker,
Storm A. Becker,	John S. Becker,	Christian Richtmyer.
John Van Dyck,		

\* It is a fact worthy of note, that while members of almost every family of distinction in the Schoharie settlements were found in hostile array, as father

The preceding memorandum embraces few if any names of individuals north of the present limits of Middleburgh; although there were many patriots about Foxes creek, and the Schoharie valleys farther north, and not a few in the more distant settlements. The party named assembled at Middleburgh, and began fortifying the stone house of John Becker, afterwards picketed in, and occupied as the middle fort. The record of Swart thus continues:

“I was enrolled in the militia at sixteen years of age; [this was the lawful age for enrolling at that period] served as a private six months; then I was appointed a corporal—served in that capacity about one year; then I was appointed sergeant in Capt. Hager’s company; 1778, I was appointed ensign in said company, in the room of John L. Lawyer; 1786, I was promoted to first major of the regiment; 1798, I was promoted to lieutenant colonel com’t; 1784 I was appointed justice of the peace without my knowledge; 1796 I was appointed one of the judges of the county, which office I have resigned 1818; 1798 I was elected a member of assembly; the next election I was solicited to stand again as a candidate, which I utterly refused; 1806 I was elected a member of Congress. I was afterwards again requested to stand as a candidate for Congress, which I refused; when John Gebhard, Judge Shepard, and Boyd were candidates for Congress. Gebhard and Shepard met with their friends at the Court House for one of them to give way; no arrangement could be made; they both signed a written declaration to give way in case I would accept a nomination, which I also refused. 1816 I was elected a senator. At the expiration of my time I was again requested to stand a candidate for the senate, which I also refused. I never craved or requested an office.

“I was one of the first that signed the compact and association. 1776 I turned out to Stone Arabia to check the progress of the enemy and tories. In the fall of the same year, I turned out to Albany, from thence to Fort Edward, from thence to Johnstown, to check the enemy. 1777, in the spring, I turned out to Harpersfield, from thence to the Delaware to take up disaffected, from there home. Three days home, I went down the Hellenbergh to take tories; after we had together about twenty-five of them, went to Albany and delivered them in jail. A few days afterwards went to Harpersfield; from thence to Charlotte river to take

against son, brother against brother, &c., all the members of the *Hager* family at once united with those who were unfurling to the winds of Heaven, the stars and stripes of freedom. From the number of Beckers on this list, we may reasonably suppose that few of that name were tories.

McDonald, and send him to jail. In August 1777, was one of the thirty-two that made a stand to oppose McDonald and his party. I was one of the two that risked our lives to crowd through the tories' guns to go to Albany for assistance; was taken prisoner by the Indians and tories; the same evening I made my escape.\* I was one of the six councillors that went from the stone house across Schoharie creek into the woods in a *cave*, to consult what measures to adopt—secrecy at that time was the best policy.† Did not McDonald and his party come down as far as my house, and there encamp till next day, and destroy every thing? I had left home. The same day McDonald and his party were defeated and fled into the woods, and went off to Canada, and about twenty-six from Brakabeen went with him. What would have been the result if our small party had made no resistance, and had tamely submitted? McDonald would have marched through Schoharie, and in all probability reached Albany. What was the consequence as far as he came down? Was not the farm of Adam Crysler confiscated? Also the farm of Adam Bouck and brothers? Also the farm of Frederick Bouck? Also the farm of Bastian Becker? Also the farm of John Brown? Also the farm of Hendrick Mattice? Also the farm of Nicholas Mattice, and a number of others that were indicted? And a number more that had joined McDonald and fired on our men."

Peter and Mattice Ball, as their father was chairman of committee, were subjected to much arduous duty, and consequently were often pressed into unexpected service. *Peter Ball* related to the author the following melancholy incident. He had been sent to Ticonderoga with a sleigh load of stores for the army, during the winter preceding Burgoyne's campaign. While returning, in company with other sleighs which had been there for the same purpose, the horses attached to one of them, which was driven by a boy and contained *six soldiers*, took fright at the sound of a drum in one of the sleighs. They were driving upon ice at the time, and if I mistake not, they were on the Hudson,

\* Swart and his neighbor, Ephraim Vrooman, were sent to Albany for aid, by Col. Vrooman, and started on foot, supposed the day before Col. Harper did, and arrived there almost as soon. They were detained on their way, by coming unexpectedly upon a party of armed royalists; but finally escaped from them and pursued their journey.

† The stone house to which he alludes, was that of John Becker, afterwards fortified as the middle fort. The cave, or place of concealment, formerly called "the committee hole," was on the opposite side of the river from Middleburgh, in a ravine between the mountains.

near Saratoga. When the horses started, one of the men took the reins from the boy, who jumped out and escaped; but the soldiers and horses broke through the ice and were all drowned. Ball assisted in recovering the bodies of the soldiers, and conveyed them to Albany in his sleigh.

Once he carried a load of powder in a wagon to Lake George; three other loads went at the same time, and all were guarded by military from Albany. On two other occasions, he was sent to Fort Edward with flour from Schoharie, and was pressed to take loads from there to Lake George. On those occasions he had to lie out nights, and suffered from cold.

Chairman Ball resided about half a mile north of the stone church in Schoharie, known, when fortified in the Revolution, as the Lower Fort. His son, Wilhelmus Ball, now resides on the same ground. Peter Ball once playfully remarked to the author, that his father had *nine* children by his first wife, and only *ten* by his second.

Several anecdotes of interest are told of Chairman Ball. His neighbor, George Mann, who was a captain of militia, kept a public house where Cornelius Vrooman now lives, and warmly advocated royalty. His house was made the rallying point for Tories and Indians in the year 1776 and early part of '77, to consider the past and plan future operations. The individuals of this stamp who usually met there, neither liked Johannes Ball nor his politics. It was therefore thought best to get him out of the way if possible: indeed, it was afterwards asserted and confidently believed, that *five hundred* guineas were offered by an agent of the king for his destruction. David Ogeyonda, a subtle Schoharie warrior, who had a hut on the lands of Adam Vrooman, and who had been for some time active for the Tories, doing the duties of a runner, spy, &c., was to be the instrument of his death. Ball was to be invited to the house of Mann, under the pretence of having important business to transact with him, or some one else, when David was to provoke him to a quarrel, and thus have a plausible pretext to kill him. Hostilities had not yet gone so far in Schoharie, that either party felt justified in imbruing their



hands in the blood of an old neighbor, without the show of cause. Ball went to the house of Mann, at the appointed time, taking the precaution to go armed with a brace of loaded pistols. He found that the business was of little importance, but that the Indian, David, was determined to quarrel with him. As the savage not unfrequently seized the handle of a long knife worn in his girdle, he suspected his motive and made good his escape; keeping a chair with one hand between his enemy and himself until he reached the door, while the other hand rested upon a pistol. This transaction took place but a short time previous to the death of this Indian, as will appear hereafter.

It had been the usual custom for ministers of the gospel, to remember the king in their prayers on the Sabbath, previous to the commencement of difficulties. One Sunday, as Chairman Ball was leaving the stone church, just before the outbreak of hostilities, when the excitement of stifled feeling was scarcely controlled, he said to one of his Whig neighbors, who was standing so near old domine Schuyler that the latter could hear the remark, "the domine does not dare to pray for *King George* any more, and for *Congress* he will not pray." Schuyler usually preached in Low Dutch at Middleburgh, and in German at Schoharie.

Col. Peter Vrooman, one of the Schoharie committee, was a major of militia before the revolution. He was a captain in the French war, and assisted in erecting fortifications at Oswego. If not as energetic as some officers, he was far from being as pusillanimous as represented in the *Annals of Tryon County*, or *Stone's Life of Brant*. The old soldiers who served under him, represent him as having been a bold and determined man, and his conduct on several occasions during the war, gave good evidence of that fact. He was very much respected in the county, and is said to have been *nineteen years* a member of either the senate or assembly of New York. An attempt was made to take him prisoner during the war. A liberal reward had been offered for his apprehension. A meeting of the council of safety was to take place at his house, and supposing he would remain at home, several of the enemy had secreted themselves, intending



to secure his person when the rest of the committee retired. The snow was deep and the enemy expected an easy conquest ; but it became necessary for him to leave home with his guests, and the intentions of the foe were thwarted.

In 1776, a plan was devised by Governor Tryon, aided by the Mayor of New York, to seize the person of Gen. Washington ; some of whose guard were in the plot : but the design of the enemy was seasonably discovered, and those who were conniving with the enemy, executed.—*Bancroft's Washington*.

In the fall of 1776, Congress sent Dr. Franklin, Silas Dean and Arthur Lee as commissioners to the court of France for aid : and also resolved to build a navy.

The year 1776 closed without any thing remarkable occurring to disturb, unusually, the peace of the frontier settlements. After the Declaration of Independence, events transpired in other places, involving the safety of the republic. In August, the whole of Long Island fell into the hands of the enemy, and in September, the city of New York followed the same fate.\*

\* The masterly retreat of Gen. Washington with his army across the East river from Brooklyn to New York, is thus related by Major, afterwards Col. Benjamin Tallmadge, in his military journal : " In the face of many difficulties, the Commander-in-chief so arranged his business, that on the evening of the 29th, [Aug.] by 10 o'clock, the troops began to retire from the lines in such a manner that no chasm was made in the line, but as one regiment left their station on guard, the remaining troops moved to the right and left, and filled up the vacancies, while Gen. Washington took his station at the ferry, and superintended the embarkation of the troops. It was one of the most anxious, busy nights that I ever recollect, and being the third in which hardly any of us had closed our eyes to sleep, we were all greatly fatigued. As the dawn of the next day approached, those of us who remained in the trenches became very anxious for our own safety, at which time there were several regiments still on duty. At this time a very dense fog began to rise, and it seemed to settle in a peculiar manner over both encampments. I recollect this peculiar, providential occurrence perfectly well, and so very dense was the atmosphere, that I could scarcely discern a man at six yards distance. When the sun rose we had just received orders to leave the lines, but before we reached the ferry, the Commander-in-chief sent one of his aids to order the regiment back to its former station. Col. Chester immediately faced about and returned to the lines, where we tarried until the sun had risen, but the fog remained as dense as ever. Finally, the second order arrived for the regiment to retire, and we very joyfully bid those trenches a

I shall have repeatedly to speak of the difficulty the Americans experienced in procuring a supply of the munitions of war. The following anecdote will show that it extended to small concerns. In the early part of the contest, *gun-flints* were so scarce, that troops while performing the manual exercise, substituted wooden ones for those of silex. While James Williamson was on duty one moonlight night in 1776, on Long Island off Gardiner's Island, as piquet guard, he saw an armed barge approaching the shore near him from one of the British ships off the Island. He instantly raised his piece and cocked it, when, to his chagrin, he found it had a wooden flint in the lock. The men in the barge, who were sufficiently near to see the leveled musket, ignorant of its harmless condition, shifted their course without attempting to land.—*James Williamson.*

The defeat of the Americans on Long Island and the loss of New York, were succeeded by a catalogue of disasters, which tended to make the royalists more bold, and greatly to dishearten the Americans. Several hundred houses were destroyed in New York by fire, soon after the British took that city. In November, Forts Washington and Lee, situated nearly opposite each other on

long adieu. When we reached Brooklyn ferry the boats had not returned from their last trip, but they very soon appeared and took the whole regiment over to New York; and I think I saw Gen. Washington on the ferry stairs when I stepped into one of the last boats that received the troops. I left my horse tied to a post at the ferry.

“The troops having all safely reached New York, and the fog continuing as thick as ever, I began to think of my favorite horse, and requested leave to return and bring him off. Having obtained permission, I called for a crew of volunteers to go with me, and guiding the boat myself, I obtained my horse and got off some distance into the river before the enemy appeared in Brooklyn. As soon as they reached the ferry, we were saluted merrily from their musketry and finally by their field pieces, but we returned in safety. In the history of warfare, I do not recollect a more fortunate retreat. After all, the providential appearance of the fog saved a part of our army from being captured, and myself, for certain, among others who formed the rear guard. Gen. Washington has never received the credit which was due to him for this wise and most fortunate measure. When the enemy had taken possession of the heights opposite to the city, they commenced firing from the artillery, and the fleet pretty soon were in motion to take possession of those waters; had this been done a little earlier, this division of our army must inevitably have fallen into their hands.”

the banks of the Hudson, about ten miles above New York, which commanded the river, fell into the hands of the enemy : the former after a most gallant defence, and the latter by being abandoned ; and the Commander-in-chief, unable to oppose a superior force, retreated into New Jersey. By the fall of Fort Washington, says the diary of Col. Tallmadge, “ we lost about *three thousand* men, a great part of whom *perished in prison by severe usage, sickness, &c.*” While a dark pall seemed spreading around the cause of Liberty, Gen. Howe issued a proclamation offering pardon to all who would submit to royal authority. The prospects looked so gloomy, that many of the best citizens of New Jersey were induced to sacrifice their feelings—abandon Freedom’s cause, and claim British protection. Gen. Washington, with the remains of his army, was obliged to retreat over the Delaware ; about which time the British gained possession of Rhode Island. The sagacious commander, who had seen his troops repeatedly in retreat before a well fed and well clothed enemy, not only observed their numbers fast lessening by desertion, but also the necessity of staying the tide of that enemy’s success, and rolling back the cloud which seemed ready to burst and obscure the light of Liberty forever. He resolved to hazard all in one bold effort, and on Christmas night he crossed the Delaware at Trenton, surprised a body of Hessian soldiers—took nearly a thousand prisoners, and recrossed the river in safety, with the loss of only nine men.

On the 2d of January, 1777, the main body of the British army under Cornwallis, who had hastened on from New York after the capture of the Hessians, marched to attack the Americans. They encamped near Trenton at night, intending to commence an action in the morning, when Washington, knowing the comparative weakness of his famished troops, conceived and executed another bold project. After renewing his fires, he left his encampment about midnight, and by a circuitous route gained the rear of the enemy—pushed on to Princeton, near which place he met and defeated a body of them, and again took several hundred prisoners. The enemy finding himself out-generaled, retreated to New

Brunswick, and the American army went into winter quarters at Morristown, New Jersey. The brilliant victories of Trenton and Princeton, while they tended with magnetic power to raise the drooping spirits of the patriot band—in fact, of the whole American people—won for their great leader the appellation of the *American Fabius*. Few can realize at this day, the importance of those victories to the American arms. For months, a series of disasters had attended them, and the stoutest hearts were beginning to yield to despair. The great and good Washington led forth to conquest on those occasions, a half-naked, famished troop of heroes, who, under similar circumstances, would have followed no other leader.

Reader ! would you realize the sufferings of that little band of patriots, who remained willing to follow the fortunes of your bleeeing country, in the darkest hour of her adversity ?—and by so doing arrive at a more just estimate of the value of that liberty you now enjoy ? Imagine yourself on some of the coldest nights of winter, when the wintry winds are moaning around you, and the stars are looking coldly from the blue vault above, seated by the road side where is passing in silence a body of armed men, fatigued, disheartened, ragged, barefooted, faint from want of food, and many with limbs frozen from exposure :—and on the morrow, go trace their footsteps o’er the frozen ground by *their own blood* ; then tell me if you can guard with too much watchfulness—or look with favor upon any attempt to mar that liberty ?

The proverbial caution and prudence of General Washington, were perhaps evinced in nothing more visibly during the war, than in his general orders to avoid the ill will or needless suffering of the citizens. When his cold and wearied troops encamped the night after the battle of Princeton, as has been stated by an officer who was present, his orders contained this unusual requisition—“ *not to burn the stone walls !* ”—tacitly implying, that they might, on that one occasion, *burn rail fences*, which are said to have been burned with impunity.

The enemy having matured his plans during the winter, began



to move early in the summer of 1777, and expected to make an easy conquest of the whole colony of New York. Gen. Burgoyne left Crown Point with such an army as he had vauntingly declared in the British Parliament, he could lead from Maine to Georgia; and with it one of the best trains of artillery ever seen in America. He was to push his way to Albany along the Hudson. Colonel St. Leger, with a large body of British, Tories and Indians, left Oswego about the same time, intending to pillage the beautiful valley of the Mohawk, and rest himself after his work of destruction, at Albany. Sir Henry Clinton, whose well fed troops had been basking in some of the smiles and some of the frowns of the New York *fair*, after doing what mischief he pleased along the romantic shores of the Hudson, was to offer his services and compliments in person to the citizens of Albany. And lastly Captain McDonald, a noted Tory leader—a Scotchman who had been living for a time on Charlotte river, with a body of several hundred royalists and Indians, was making his way down through the Schoharie settlements, intending to meet the trio already named, and revel with them in “the beauty and booty” of Albany.

This was a most trying period for New York. To meet and repel the several attacks, appeared to some of the most patriotic a matter of impossibility—but with a firm reliance on the God of battles for success, they buckled on their armor, and resolved to try. Most of the published accounts erroneously make the irruption of McDonald and his legions at a later date.

Some of the Schoharie militia were called into service on several occasions in the latter part of the year 1776, and early part of 1777. *Mattice Ball* said he was under Capt. Hager in the enterprise which Judge Swart alludes to, as having taken place in the spring of 1777. The party were volunteers, and proceeded to Loonenburg, now Athens, to arrest Col. James Huetson, who was marshaling Tories. They were in seach of him thirteen days, a part of which time they levied a tax upon his poultry yard, and ate up his chickens. After securing him and some twenty other genial spirits, they delivered them to the military department at Albany for safe keeping. Huetson was afterwards hung.



I have remarked briefly, that members of families in Schoharie were found entertaining different opinions respecting the belligerent attitude of England and her colonies, and consequently were in hostile array. Capt. Jacob Ball, mentioned as the brother of Johannes Ball, raised a company of 63 royalists at the Beavertown and in Duaneburgh and went to Canada, accompanied by several relatives. George Mann, another captain of militia to whom we have alluded, on being ordered out with his company to oppose the enemy, openly declared himself friendly to the royal power. Adam Crysler and his brothers, with several other individuals, who were men of no little influence residing in the south part of the Schoharie settlement, also sided with royalty. The example of several respectable officers and other individuals of reputation, as may be inferred, augured no good for the welfare of that community, as the prudent knew full well that "*a house divided against itself,*" like Franklin's empty bag, "*could not stand alone.*"

As appears by an affidavit of *William Johnston, jr.*, made July 16, 1777, which I find on the journal of the New York council of safety, Joseph Brant had then, with some eighty warriors, commenced his marauding enterprises on the settlements at Unadilla; by appropriating their cattle, sheep and swine to his own benefit. To obtain satisfaction for those cattle, and if possible get the Indians to remain neutral in the approaching contest, in the latter part of June, 1777, Gen. Herkimer, with three hundred and eighty of the Tryon county militia, proceeded to Unadilla, (an Indian settlement on the Susquehanna,) to hold an interview with Brant. That celebrated chief, then at Oquago, was sent for by Gen. Herkimer, and arrived on the 27th, after the Americans had been there about eight days in waiting.

Colonel John Harper, who attended Gen. Herkimer at this time, made an affidavit on the 16th of July following the interview, showing the principal grievances of which the Indians complained, as also the fact *that they were in covenant with the king, whose belts were yet lodged among them,* and whose service they intended to enter. The instrument farther testified, that

Brant, instead of returning to Oswego, as he had informed Gen. Herkimer was his intention; had remained in the neighborhood, on the withdrawal of the American militia, and was preparing to destroy the frontier settlements.

The following particulars relating to the interview between Gen. Herkimer and Brant, were obtained from the venerable patriot, *Joseph Wagner*, of Fort Plain. He states that at the first meeting of Gen. Herkimer with Brant, the latter was attended by three other chiefs, William Johnson, a son of Sir William Johnson by Molly Brant, which son was killed at the battle of Oriskany the same year, Pool, a smart looking fellow with curly hair, supposed part indian and part negro, and a short dark skinned Indian, the four encircled by a body-guard of some twenty noble looking warriors.

When in his presence, Brant rather haughtily asked Gen. Herkimer the object of his visit, which was readily made known; but seeing so many attendants, the chief suspected the interview was sought for another purpose. Said Brant to Herkimer, *I have five hundred warriors at my command, and can in an instant destroy you and your party; but we are old neighbors and friends, and I will not do it.* Col. Cox, a smart officer who accompanied Gen. Herkimer, exchanged several sarcastic expressions with Brant, which served not a little to irritate him and his followers. The two had had a quarrel a few years previous, about lands around the upper Indian castle. Provoked to anger, Brant asked Cox *if he was not the son-in-law of old George Klock?* *Yes!* replied Cox in a tone of malignity, *and what is that to you, you d—d Indian?* At the close of this dialogue Brant's guard ran off to their camp, firing several guns, and making the hills echo back their savage yells. Gen. Herkimer then assured Brant that he intended his visit for one of a pacific nature, and urged him to prevent their moving to hostilities. A word from that chief hushed the tempest of human passion, which but an instant before had threatened to deluge the valley with blood; the parties, however, were too heated to proceed with the business which convened them. Said Brant, addressing Gen. Herkimer,

*it is needless to multiply words at this time, I will meet you here at precisely 9 o'clock to morrow morning.* The parties then separated to occupy their former position in camp.

From what had transpired, I presume Gen. Herkimer did not feel wholly secure in his person; for early on the following morning he called on Mr. Wagner, then an active young soldier of his party, and taking him aside, asked him *if he could keep a secret.* When assured in the affirmative, he informed Wagner that he wished him to select three other persons, who, with himself should be in readiness at a given signal, to shoot Brant and the other three chiefs, *if the interview about to take place did not end amicably.* In case of the least hostile movement on their part, the chiefs were to be sacrificed. Wagner selected Abraham and George Herkimer, nephews of Gen. Herkimer, and a third person name now forgotten. Col. Stone, speaking of this transaction in the *Life of Brant*, not aware of its having been dictated by the circumstances as any arrangement of *caution*, which should reflect credibly on the prudence of Gen. Herkimer, thus comments on it—"There is something so revolting—so rank and foul—in this project of meditated treachery, that it is difficult to reconcile it with the known character of Gen. Herkimer." In another place he adds, "A betrayal of his [Herkimer's] confidence, under those circumstances, would have brought a stain upon the character of the provincials, which all the waters of the Mohawk could not have washed away." Difficult indeed would it be *if necessary*, to reconcile this affair with the honorable life of the brave Herkimer, but such is not the case, and I have presented this whole matter solely to correct an impression conveyed in the life of Brant, which reflects ignobly on the character of that officer. The whole proceeding was only one of *precaution*, and had it been otherwise would have been executed, as ample opportunity was afforded Wagner and his accomplices, to assassinate the chiefs. Col. Stone quotes the manuscript of my informant as authority for what he states, but there is some mistake in the matter, as Wagner assured the writer he never had furnished a manuscript account of the affair to any one.

With the arrangement of circumspection on the part of Gen. Herkimer, as stated above, the parties held their interview on the 28th of June; the last convention of the kind held in New York. Brant was the first to speak: said he—"Gen Herkimer, I now fully comprehend the object of your visit, but you are too late, I am already engaged to serve the king. We are old friends and I can do no less than let you return home unmolested, although you are entirely within my power." After a little more conversation, in which the parties agreed to separate amicably, the conference ended, at which time Gen. Herkimer presented to Brant seven or eight fat cattle that had but just arrived, owing to obstructions on the outlet of Otsego Lake, down which stream they were driven or transported. For three days previous to the arrival of the cattle, the Americans were on very short allowance.

Whether Brant had five hundred men at his command may be doubted; Col. Harper has given their number as about one hundred and thirty-seven—possibly there were foes in concealment unknown to that officer. The Americans retraced their steps to the Mohawk valley, and scarcely had they set out, when the Indians began to repeat their depredations on the patriotic citizens in the neighborhood. Brant soon after fell back to Oquago, to strengthen his numbers, and prepare to act in concert with St. Leger.

After the war Brant visited the Mohawk valley, at which time Mr. Wagner conversed with him about the treaty at Unadilla. On being assured by my informant that he was in readiness at the second interview to shot him down, that chief expressed much surprise that Gen. Herkimer had taken such precaution.

Among the papers of Chairman Ball I find the following :

"Schoharie, July 7th, 1777, in Committee Chamber first *Resolved*, that all the persons between the ages of sixteen and fifty years, from the dwelling house of Christian Shaffer and to northward in Schoharie, are to bring their arms and accoutrements when they come to the meeting at either of the two churches in



Fountain Town and Foxes Town,\* on Sunday or any other day when kept; and if any of them shall neglect in bringing their arms and accoutrements to either of the churches, shall forfeit and pay the sum of *three shillings*, New York currency, into the hands of Mr. Johannes Ball, for the use of paying the cost for the district of Schoharie; or if any person shall not pay the said sum as aforesaid, it shall be lawful for Mr. Johannes Ball to give a warrant directed to a sergeant or corporal, and levy the same on the offender's goods and chattels, and also the costs thereof.

“And the persons inhabiting from the dwelling of Baltus Kryslers to the said Christian Shaffer, are to bring their arms, &c. to the church in Weiser's Town, as they are ordered to [in] Foxes Town; and if neglected to pay the same to Mr. Johannes Becker, and be put in execution by him as ordered by Mr. Ball aforesaid.

“And persons southward from Baltus Kryslers are to be armed when [they] come to any meeting that may be kept in Brakabeen, and if neglected, to pay the fines to Mr. William Zimmer, and to be put by him in execution as beforementioned, and for the use as aforesaid.

“N. B. Their resolve in Fountain Town Church is to be paid to Mr. Johannes Lawyer, and to be put by him in execution as within mentioned, and for the use as aforesaid; and George Warner is appointed to see [that] the inhabitants of Cobelskill bring their arms when [they] come to meeting there, and put this resolve in execution as within mentioned, and for the use aforesaid.

“Secondly, Resolved, that four watches are to be kept in Schoharie every night from this time constant: the first is to be kept at the dwelling house of Capt. George Mann, and under his command, and in his absence the next in command; the inhabitants from Christian Shaffer's dwelling house and to northward, are to be under Capt. Mann's command for the watch to consist of *eight men*. The second is to be kept at the dwelling house of Mr. Hendrick P. Becker, and under the command of Capt. George Richtmyer, and in his absence the next officer in command: the inhabitants from Hendrick Tansen's house and so northward to Christian Shaffer's, are under the command of this second watch, and to consist of *six men*. The third is to be kept at the dwelling house of Mr. Johannes Feak, and under the command of Lieut. Martynus Van Slyck, and in his absence the next officer in command; the inhabitants from Baltus Kryslers dwelling house and so northward to Hendrick Tansen's are under the command of this third watch, and to consist of *six men*. And the fourth is to be kept by the inhabitants from Baltus Kryslers and so southward, at the dwelling house of Mr. Hendrick Hager under the command of Capt. Jacob Hager, in his absence the next officer in command;

“The former a Lutheran church then standing a little distance east of the Court House, and the latter the stone edifice erected by the Dutch church, and still standing one mile north of the Court House.



and this watch is to consist of *six men*. Every person or persons neglecting to serve on such or either of such watches aforementioned, shall for every neglect pay and forfeit the sum of *twelve shillings* for the use of the district of Schoharie."

At an early stage of difficulties, the little settlement at Harpersfield, which was greatly exposed to savage inroads, organized a committee of vigilance, of which Isaac Patchin was chairman. This settlement was within the limits of Tryon county. In view of the enemy's proximity, Mr. Patchin wrote to the State Council of Safety, on the 4th of July, 1777, as follows :

"Gentlemen—The late irruptions and hostilities committed at Tunadilla, by Joseph Brant, with a party of Indians and tories, have so alarmed the well-affected inhabitants of this and the neighboring settlements, who are now the entire frontier of this state, that except your honors doth afford us immediate protection, we shall be obliged to leave our settlements to save our lives and families; especially as there is not a man on the outside of us, but such as have taken protection of Brant, and many of them have threatened our destruction in a short time, the particular circumstances of which Col. Harper, (who will wait on your honors,) can give you a full account of, by whom we hope for your protection, in what manner to conduct ourselves."

On the 8th July, William Harper wrote the Albany council from Cherry Valley, also within Tryon county, stating the exposed condition of that place, and the rumor of the enemy's nearness under Brant. The committee to which was referred the correspondence of Isaac Patchin and Wm. Harper, introduced several resolutions to the council of safety on the 17th July; in which they recommended raising two companies of rangers, to serve on the frontiers of Tryon, Ulster, and Albany counties, under the command of John Harper and James Clyde, as captains, and Alexander Harper and John Campbell as lieutenants. Lt. Harper, as soon as twenty-five men were enlisted by Col. John Harper as recruiting officer, was to take charge of them and repair to a post of danger.

In the *correspondence of the Provincial Congress of New York*, I find the following:

*Schoharie Committee Chamber, July 17, 1777.*

"Gentlemen—The late advantage gained over us by the ene-

my, has such effect upon numbers here, that many we thought steady friends to the state seem to draw back; our state therefore, is deplorable; all our frontiers [frontier settlers] except those that are to take protection from the enemy, are gone, so that we are entirely open to the Indians and Tories, which we expect every hour to come to this settlement: part of our militia is at Fort Edward; the few that are here many of them, are unwilling to take up arms to defend themselves, as they are not able to stand against so great a number of declared enemies, who speak openly without any reserve. Therefore, if your honors do not grant us immediate relief, of about five hundred men to help defend us, we must either fall a prey to the enemy, or take protection also. For further particulars we refer you to the bearer, Col. Wills, in whom we confide to give you a true account of our state and situation, and of the back settlements, as he is well acquainted with them. We beg that your honors will be pleased to send us an answer by the bearer. We remain,

Your honors' most obed't humble servants.

Signed by order of the committee.

JOHANNES BALL, *Chairman.*

The above letter was read in Council, at their afternoon session, on Saturday, July 19th, and after some discussion it was referred to *Messrs. Jay, Platt, and R. R. Livingston*. On the 22d, the Council wrote "*To the Chairman of the Committee of Schoharie,*" as follows:

"*Kingston, July 22, 1777.*

"Gentlemen: It greatly astonishes this Council that the settlement of Schoharie, which has always been considered as firmly and spiritedly attached to the American cause, should be panic-struck upon the least appearance of danger. Can you conceive that our liberties can possibly be redeemed from that vassalage which our implacable foes are, with unrelenting cruelty, framing for us, without some danger and some vigorous efforts on our part? To expect that Providence, however righteous our cause, will, without a vigorous use of those means which it has put in our power, interpose in our behalf, is truly to expect that God will work miracles for us, when those means, well improved, will afford sufficient security to our inestimable rights. It is your bounden duty, if you wish for the smiles of Heaven in favor of the public cause in which you are so deeply interested, to acquit yourselves like men. A few worthless Indians, and a set of villains, who have basely deserted their country, are all the enemies you have to fear.

"We have good reason to believe that the greatest and most deserving part of the Six Nations are well disposed toward us. This Council is exerting itself to secure you against danger, and only

wish you would second their efforts. Tryon county is a frontier to your settlement; in that county Fort Schuyler is a respectable fortress, properly garrisoned. Major General Schuyler has sent up a part of a regiment as a further reinforcement. We have authorized Colonel Harper to raise and embody two hundred men for covering and protecting the inhabitants, and have formed such a disposition of the militia of the county of Tryon for alternate relieves as we hope will tend effectually to secure you.

"If any proclamations or protections should be offered you by the enemy, by all means reject them. From the woful experience of those who have fallen within their influence in other parts of the country, we have the highest reasons to believe that your acceptance of those tenders of friendship, should they be made, will render your misery and slavery unavoidable.

"In further attention to the cause of your settlement and Tryon county, we have this morning sent Mr. Robert Livingston to Gen. Washington. He is authorized to concert with his Excellency the most effectual measures for putting the western frontiers of this state in all possible security.

"In the mean time we expect much from your public virtue; that it will induce you to apprehend and send to us the disaffected among you; that it will lead you to the most effectual means of securing your property from the depredations of a weak but insidious foe; and that it will teach you the impropriety of deserting your habitations, and keep you in continual readiness to repel the assaults of the enemies of the liberty of your country. We write to the general committee of the county of Albany, to give you all the countenance, assistance, and support in their power."

The following is part of a letter from the same body, under the same date, to the Albany Committee.

"Gentlemen—The great depression of spirits of the inhabitants of Tryon county, and the settlers of Schoharie, give this Council much uneasiness, as it exposes them to the depredations of an enemy whom they might otherwise despise.

"We hope that your committee will not be wanting to support the drooping spirits of the western inhabitants in general, and particularly of those within your county. We have great reason to fear the breaking up of the settlement of Schoharie, unless our exertions be seconded by your efforts. You well know that such an event on the frontiers will not only be attended with infinite mischief to the inhabitants, but will furnish cause for discouragement to the country in general. Every means should therefore be tried to prevent it.

"This Council are earnestly solicitous to put the western frontiers of this state in a situation as respectable as possible; and though they conceive the enemy's strength to consist principally in those exaggerations which result from the threats of our internal

foes, and the fears of our friends ; yet as those may be productive of real mischief, they would endeavor by every means in their power to prevent the evil. Your known exertions in the public cause will not permit them to doubt of your straining every nerve to second their endeavors," &c., &c.

The reader will observe that in the letter to the Schoharie committee, the state council, in speaking of the foe to which the Schoharie settlement was exposed, consisted only of a few worthless Indians and Tories ; and that they believed the Six Nations, as a whole, were well affected towards the republicans. This, however, as the result showed, was not the fact—as the principal warriors of four of the Six Nations had already taken up the British hatchet, and were led on by a formidable number of *royalists*. They also spoke of Tryon county as the *frontier* of Schoharie—the whole being well protected by the garrison of *Fort Schuyler*, generally known as Fort Stanwix. This part of the letter discovers the ignorance of the council of the true geography of the frontier settlements ; as that fort was situated at least 100 miles northwest of Schoharie, while the enemies of the latter were expected from a southwest direction, from whence they usually approached. In that direction were the settlements of Unadilla, Harpersfield and Wyoming, either of which could be avoided ; but the two former were early broken up and their well disposed inhabitants driven in upon less exposed communities—while the fate of the latter is too well known to be commented on here. The truth is, that, as an old soldier (*James Williamson*) of Fort Schuyler once observed to the writer, that fortress did not answer the purposes for which it was intended in the revolution, as the enemy could, and did pass round it in every direction to the frontier settlements—the unbroken forest concealing their approach, until, *as if by magic*, they appeared at the very dwellings of the pioneers.

On the 22d of July, the chairman of the Albany committee wrote to Gen. Schuyler as follows—

“Hon. Sir—Colo. Vrooman and two other gentlemen from Schoharie, are now with us, and represent the distress their part of the county is driven to.

“Threats, they hourly receive ; their persons and property are



exposed to imminent danger: nearly one-half of the people heretofore well disposed, have laid down their arms, and propose to side with the enemy. All which change has taken its origin from the desertion of Ticonderoga, the unprecedented loss of which, we are afraid, will be followed by a revolt of more than one-half of the northern part of this county. We therefore beg leave to suggest whether it would not be advisable to detain one or two companies of continental troops, which are expected here, to be sent that way for a few days, which we suppose might bring the greater part again to a sense of their duty."

On the 24th of July, the chairman of the Albany committee wrote to the council of safety as follows—

Gentlemen—Yours of the 22d instant is now before us, recommending us to use our utmost influence to revive the drooping spirits of the inhabitants of this and Tryon county. A duty so essential as this, has long since been our principal object, by following the example you have recommended to us; but upon the whole, gentlemen, they are only words upon which we have long played, and we earnestly hope they may be realized in such a manner as that the usual confidence the people of this and Tryon county have in our board, may not depreciate in the eyes of the public, on which head we beg leave to remark, that your sanguine expectations of Col. Harper's rangers will by no means answer the purpose. The gentleman undoubtedly has abilities, and will exert himself; but when this matter is held up in a more clear view, it will appear that every man, almost, in this and Tryon county, adapted for the ranging service, is engaged in the continental, occasioned by the amazing bounty that has been given; and on the other hand, the necessary men employed in various branches attending an army, together with the constant drain of militia, though but few in number, occasioned by the above circumstance, are still necessitated to discharge their duty to their country, all which point out to you the impracticability of the plan. After considering these particulars, (which we believe have not been sufficiently suggested by the honorable the council,) we conceive it will be impossible to collect any more men on the proposed plan, by reason that their pay and encouragement is not adequate to the times. If the foregoing difficulties have any weight, you may judge that no essential service can be expected from the rangers, nor can have any weight with the people to the westward.

"We enclose you a copy of a letter by us sent to Gen. Schuyler, from which you will perceive the distressed situation the people of Schoharie are in."

On the 25th of July, Mr. Livingston returned from his conference with the Commander-in-chief, and reported that his excel-



lency had already ordered Gen. Glover's division of the army to march to the relief of Tryon county; and a letter was immediately dispatched to the committee of that county, informing them that Glover's brigade had marched to Albany, there to receive directions from Gen. Schuyler, then in command of the northern army. The latter officer, in a letter to the Albany committee, dated Moses Creek, four miles below Fort Edward, July 24th, after speaking of the gloomy aspect of military affairs in that quarter, the desertion of New England troops, &c., thus adds:

"Happy I should still be, in some degree, if I could close the melancholy tale here; but every letter I receive from the county of Tryon, advises me that the inhabitants of it will lay down their arms, unless I support them with continental troops. From what I have said you will see the impossibility of my complying with their request. The district of Schoharie has also pointedly intimated, that unless continental troops are sent there, they will also submit to the enemy. Should it be asked what line of conduct I mean to hold amidst this variety of difficulties and distress, I would answer, *to dispute every inch of ground with Gen. Burgoyne, and retard his descent into the country as long as possible*, without the least hopes of being able to prevent his ultimately reaching Albany, unless I am reinforced from Gen. Washington, or by a respectable body of the militia. The former I am advised I am not to have, and whence to procure the latter I know not. I must therefore look up to you; but though I am under the fullest conviction that you will readily afford me every aid in your power, yet I fear it cannot be much.

"In this situation you will be pleased to permit me to observe, that I think the council of safety ought to press Gen. Washington for an immediate reinforcement of at least fifteen hundred good continental troops. Those of our own state, if possible, if not from any of the southern colonies; one thousand to reinforce me, the remainder to be sent to Tryon county."

In the same letter Gen. Schuyler expressed his fears that should Burgoyne be able to penetrate to Albany, the force approaching the Mohawk under Col. St. Ledger would be able to meet him there; in which case if Gen. Howe pressed up the river, Gen. Washington would either be put between two fires, or compelled to file off into New England. He however trusted such a result might not be realized, and hoped the freedom of his sentiments *would not be thought to rise from a principle which would disgrace a soldier*. He added, "I assure you they do not;

and I hope my countrymen will never have occasion to blush for me, whatever may be the event of this campaign."

The Council of Safety, in reply to the Albany Committee's letter of the 24th, responded on the 27th of July as follows:—"Gentlemen—Your letter of the 24th inst. has just been received and laid before the council. It was not by words alone that the council expects the drooping spirits of the inhabitants of Tryon county should be revived, nor do they know any other way of realizing those expectations than by vigorous exertions.

"It is highly unreasonable to expect that the militia of other states or additional detachments from the continental army should be sent to Tryon or Schoharie, when their own exertions, with the aid already afforded, would secure them. Harper's rangers are not the only measures taken for their support; a third part of the militia is ordered to be embodied, and the council will provide for their pay. But if when their all is at stake, they should think the wages too little, and from such degenerate, mercenary principles refuse to march, they will merit the distinction to which their want of courage and public spirit will expose them.

"It is by example, not speeches, that the council wish they may be encouraged. They expect the county of Albany will exert itself; that their leading men on other occasions, will not be backward now; that they will march with the militia, and animate the body of the people by their perseverance, spirit and patriotism. If the salvation of such a cause be not sufficient to induce us to such actions, future generations may with propriety say that we did not deserve to be free. If malcontents among you are fomenting divisions or encouraging a revolt, they ought to be immediately apprehended, and it is presumed you have sufficient strength at least for the purpose of internal government. If a few dispirited people are permitted to lay down their arms, and with impunity, not only to disobey orders, but to say they will side with the enemy, government has become base and feeble indeed. Your powers are equal to all these exigences, and the council hope you will exert them. That large drafts of men have been made from the militia is a fact not to be denied; but it is equally true that their number is still very respectable, and if they please, very formidable. In short, there is reason to fear that the panic and irresolution which seems to prevail in the western district, will, by being introduced into the history of the present glorious contest, injure the reputation which this state has justly acquired by its strenuous and noble exertions in the common cause of America.

"P. S. We have the best assurances that Gen. Glover, with his brigade, is sent up to reinforce the northern department; and we flatter ourselves that Major General Schuyler will, as he finds himself reinforced, cause troops to file off for the defence of the

western frontiers. To facilitate this, we have written pressingly to the Governor of Connecticut for aid."

The following extract of a letter from Col. Gansevoort to Col. Van Schaick, dated Fort Schuyler, July 28th, will show one of the earliest of those tragedies which crimsoned the frontier forest of New York.

"Dear Sir—Yesterday, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, our garrison was alarmed with the firing of four guns. A party of men was instantly dispatched to the place where the guns were fired, which was in the edge of the woods, about five hundred yards from the fort; but they were too late. The villians were fled, after having shot three girls who were out picking raspberries, two of whom were lying scalped and tomahawked; one dead and the other expiring, who died in about half an hour after she was brought home. The third had two balls through her shoulder, but made out to make her escape. Her wounds are not thought dangerous: by the best discoveries we have made, there were four Indians who perpetrated these murders.

"I had four men with arms just passed that place, but these mercenaries of Britain come not to fight, but to lie in wait to murder; and it is equally the same to them, if they can get a scalp, whether it is from a soldier or an innocent babe."

Instead of Gen. Schuyler's affording the western settlements any relief after having been reinforced by Glover's brigade, we find him, under date of August 1st, writing from Saratoga to the New York council as follows:

"I have desired Col. Van Schaick to apply for all the militia of Schoharie, Duanesburgh, Schenectada and Tryon county, that can be collected; but I foresee that nothing will be effected, unless a committee of your body is deputed to repair to Albany." [Those militia were intended to reinforce the northern army.]

Let us take a hasty glance at the progress of the enemy's campaign in the summer of 1777; when he hoped by one energetic blow, to separate the New England from the Middle states. Col. St. Leger, checked in his progress down the Mohawk, by a bloody battle with the Tryon county militia, at Oriskany, on the morning of August 6th, under the brave old Herkimer, in which some of his men performed prodigies of valor; and a timely sortie from Fort Schuyler by troops under Col. Willet—finding his Indians deserting him—Col. Gansevoort unwilling to surrender—

and a body of troops under Gen. Arnold advancing to raise the siege of that fortress—was obliged to make good his retreat to Canada. Gen. Burgoyne, after contesting the ground for some time, and meeting with repeated defeats—seeing his Indian allies deserting him from a dislike to Morgan's rifle-men, and his own retreat cut off, surrendered his army to Gen. Gates, who had succeeded Schuyler, as prisoners of war. Gen. Vaughan, with a body of troops from the army of Sir Henry Clinton, after ascending the Hudson as far as Kingston, and reducing that flourishing village to ashes, learning that Gov. Clinton was marching to oppose him, fell back down the river.

It remains for us to follow the footsteps of McDonald. At this unsettled period, *when no forts had been erected in the Schoharie settlements to which the timid might flee for safety*, confusion, for want of union, was manifest among the courageous.\*

Under date of August 9th, the Albany committee wrote to the council of safety as follows :

“ We inclose you a copy of a letter just now received from the committee of Schenectada. You will perceive by its contents, that a reinforcement is called for in that quarter. It gives us pain to inform you that it is out of the power of this county to send them any. The depredations committed by the tories is of the worst consequences, as it effectually prevents the militia from joining the army pursuant to Gen. Ten Broeck's request ; each part calls for more help to assist themselves. A Captain Mann, of the militia of Schoharie has collected a number of Indians and tories ; declares himself a friend to King George, and threatens destruction to all who do not lay down their arms or take protection from our enemies. In order to support our friends in that quarter, a force should be sent to them. This is needless to attempt, as a reason is assigned why no force can be had.

“ In yours of the 27th ult., you desire that every nerve may be exerted ; this has been done, though without the desired effect. Our army to the northward, we have already informed you, does not appear adequate to repel the force supposed to be coming against them,” &c., &c.

The above letter, and one from Gen. Schuyler, dated at Still-

\* In the *Annals of Tryon County*, the invasion of McDonald is erroneously set down as having occurred in 1778. Campbell also states that three forts had been erected in Schoharie the fall before. The forts were erected at the time he states ; but not, however, until after McDonald's visit.



water, August 6th, were received by the state council on the 11th: from the latter, I take the following extract :

“General Ten Broeck has ordered out the whole of the militia ; but I fear very few will march, and that most of them will behave as the Schoharie and Schenectada militia have done. How that is, you will see by the inclosed, which are copies of letters I have this morning received.” [What the conduct alluded to was, does not appear on the journal of the council, but we may suppose they refused to march until some provision was made for the protection of their own families against the common foe.]

On the afternoon of Monday, the 11th, Benjamin Bartholomew, from Schoharie, was admitted to the council chamber, and informed the council in substance :

“That a certain man at Schoharie was collecting a party in favor of the enemy : had dispirited the inhabitants ; that the few resolutely well affected were escaping from thence privately.” [That body then drafted the following letter to Gov. Clinton:] “Sir—The council have received advice, that one Captain Mann is collecting a force in Schoharie, and has prevailed upon the inhabitants, through fear, to take part with him, and even to take up arms against us. As this must expose the frontiers of Ulster and Albany counties, and the flame may possibly extend further, if not instantly checked—

“They would suggest to your Excellency the propriety of sending a party under the command of an active and intelligent officer, by the way of Woodstock or Catskill, who may fall upon the party, arouse the spirits of our friends, and give the Indians such an impression of our activity, as will render them cautious of opposing us. Perhaps about two hundred men might be spared for this purpose from the garrison in the Highlands, and, if necessary, they might again be reinstated by other militia. The council submit this plan to your Excellency, and if it should be approved, doubt not but that it will be carried instantly into execution, since secrecy and expedition will ensure its success.”

On the 11th, the Albany committee, in a letter to the council, speaking of their apprehensions for the northern army and the ultimate fate of Albany, and the meritorious conduct of Gen. Herkimer, after he was severely wounded, in refusing for hours to leave the Oriskany battle field, thus observe :

“The people of Schoharie have informed us that they will be obliged to lay down their arms. The militia that could be collected in this county have been sent to the army: they have been long



in service, and seeing no prospect of relief, intend soon to return and remove their families to a place of greater safety."

Gov. Clinton addressed the president of the council from New Windsor, on the 11th of August, as follows :

" Sir—I wrote this morning to Colo. Pawling, advising him of the conduct of Capt. Mann, of the Schoharie militia, mentioned in the letter of the committee of Albany, a copy of which you sent me. I am apprehensive, that unless he and his party are speedily routed they will become formidable and dangerous neighbors to our western frontiers. I therefore proposed to Colo. Pawling, in the letter I addressed to him this morning, the propriety of embodying a party of men out of his regiment, under an active officer, for this purpose, and directed him to call on your Honorable House for their advice and assistance on this occasion, which, should they agree with me in sentiment, they will please to afford him.

" It is clearly my opinion, that it is essential to the public safety to have this business executed with dispatch and effectually. That fellow, without doubt, acts under the encouragement and by the advice of the enemy ; and even though he should not attempt to commit hostilities on the inhabitants of the western frontiers, the very deterring of the militia from marching to the aid of the northern army alone is a capital mischief ; besides suffering such an atrocious and open offender to pass with impunity, would, in point of example, be extremely impolitic. It may be necessary to exercise a good deal of prudence with respect to the Indians who are with Capt. Mann, the management of which I must submit to the council."

The next day, his excellency again addressed the president of the council, as follows :

*" New Windsor, 12th Aug't, 1777.*

" Dear sir—On the receipt of a letter yesterday morning from General Scott, enclosing a copy of a letter from the committee of Albany, to your honble. board, containing the same intelligence respecting Capt. Mann, mentioned in your letter of the 11th inst.. just now delivered me, I immediately wrote to Colonel Pawling on that subject, pointing out the propriety of destroying Mann and his party by a sudden exertion, with a detachment of the militia under an active officer, and desiring him, if he thought it practicable, to set about it immediately ; and in that case to call upon the council for their advice and aid. This morning I addressed a letter to your honorable board on the same subject, by which you will observe my sentiments coincide exactly with the council's on this occasion. I dare not however, at present, venture to take any of the continental troops from the garrison in the Highlands for this business.

“The designs of the enemy under General Howe, are yet uncertain; the garrison not over strong; and should any unlucky accident happen in that quarter, in the absence of troops, which might be drawn from thence for this expedition, I would be greatly and perhaps deservedly censured. If the militia are to be employed, they can be much easier and more expeditiously had in the neighborhood of Kingston and Marbletown, than by marching them up from the fort.

“Major Pawling was charged with my letter to council, and left my house this morning for Kingston. I mentioned this scheme to him, and he expressed a strong desire to command the party, to which I consented, provided a party proper for him to command should be ordered out on this occasion. I know him to be possessed of prudence as well as spirit.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

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The reader will perceive by the correspondence in the preceding chapter, that provision had been made, although tardily, to succor Schoharie. Many well disposed citizens in McDonald's descent through the southern settlements, seeing no assistance at hand, anxious for the safety of their families and property, accepted his offered protection of royalty—while not a few joined in the wake of the tory chief, to swell his already formidable numbers. In his approach to the more thickly settled parts of Schoharie, he could have numbered several hundred followers—Indians and loyalists—armed with various weapons, which number rumor, with her many tongues, greatly multiplied. It is not surprising that the comparatively small body of militia assembled at the house of John Becker—a part of which house is now standing—felt themselves too weak to oppose their enemies unaided. They, however, began barricading the windows and doors of this stone dwelling; and deputed two of their number, Vrooman and Swart, to go to Albany for assistance.

*Henry Hager*, of North Blenheim, late a judge of Schoharie county, very kindly furnished the author with a manuscript of some facts relating to Schoharie. He states that McDonald reached the river above Brakabeen, on Sunday the 10th of August, and “marched up and down the road, stationing guards, &c.” As the enemy were over-running the valley, Henry Hager, grandfather of my informant, then over 70 years old, was anxious to inform the *patriot* party below of the invader's progress and espionage along the valley. There was no whig near with

whom he could consult—indeed the Hager family was the only one, for a distance of several miles, that had not either already joined the enemy's standard, or accepted of his proffered protection: he therefore started to do the errand himself, a distance of nearly nine miles. Leaving home about sun-down, he had proceeded but a short distance when he was brought to a stand by an emissary of royalty; who demanded where he was going, his business, etc. His good judgment readily prompting a reply, he feigned business with a blacksmith living below. The sprig of his majesty informed him that the man he wished to see was in a house near by. He was permitted to enter and do his errand, which was to order some small job. We suppose the interview between Mr. Hager and Vulcan to have been on Sunday: the latter told him he would do his work, and that he might call for it as early as he pleased next morning. Leaving the infected house, Hager again encountered the man endowed with brief authority, who granted him permission to return home.

It was nearly dark when the aged patriot left the tory sentinel. Proceeding a few hundred yards on his way home, until out of sight of the enemy, he went down a bank of the river which he forded, and by a circuitous route, reached the *Stone House* in safety and communicated the approach of the invaders. Capt. Jacob Hager, his son, was there at the time. He had returned with a party of Schoharie militia from the northern army but a few days before, where he had distinguished himself in several hazardous enterprises, transporting cannon to Fort Edward, etc. On Monday morning Col. Vrooman, fearing Swart and his comrade might not reach Albany in season to obtain assistance, sent Capt. Hager and Henry Becker on the same errand; with instructions to keep the woods whenever there was danger of meeting with detention.

At this juncture of their proceedings, in the afternoon of the day on which Hager and Becker had left, Col. John Harper—whose duty the reader will remember, required him to look to the protection of Schoharie—arrived, to consult with Col. Vrooman and the Whigs there assembled, on the best course to be adopted un-

der the circumstances. It was readily agreed that the friends of equal rights assembled, or likely to be in season, were too few to oppose successfully McDonald's progress. No time was to be lost, as it was expected the band of outlaws would reach that vicinity on the following day: in order, therefore, to get aid in season to be of service, it was thought advisable for a messenger to proceed immediately to Albany on horseback. Col. Harper volunteered his services, and although the day was far spent, he mounted and set forward. Knowing that it would be extremely hazardous to pursue his journey in the night, he rode about five miles and put up at a public house then kept by John I. Lawyer, mentioned in Chap. III. of this work: in the latter part of the war his son, Jacob Lawyer, Jr. was its host. This ancient inn stood near the old Lutheran parsonage. The building is still standing on the premises of Chester Lasell—*Mrs. W. G. Michaels*.

On the night Col. Harper staid at Lawyer's, there was quite a gathering of Indians and tories, at the tavern known in those days as, *The Brick House at the Forks of the Road*,\* distant from the former inn about a mile and a quarter. The object of this meeting of genial spirits, was, no doubt, to receive and communicate intelligence from and to the *royalist* party above, and also to learn tidings from such as kept an eye on the movements at Lawyer's tavern. A whig (George Warner, Jr. of Cobelskill) who was a watchman secreted with others that night, along the fences south of the *Brick House*, to note the motions of the enemy, assured the author that he saw individuals all night passing and re-passing—whom he supposed communicating with the McDonald party.

Col. Harper, having secured his horse and taken supper, retired early to an upper room, and locked the door, but did not think it prudent to undress. Some time in the evening, a party from the *Brick House* arrived at Lawyer's. The object of their visit being made known to the landlord, which was to get Harper to accom-

\* This house, now owned and occupied by Cornelius Vrooman, stood in the forks of the old Albany and Schenectada roads. It was a two story dwelling at the period of which I am speaking.



pany them to their rendezvous, he expostulated with them for intruding upon the rest of his guest, but to no purpose, for *see him they would*. Knowing that he was near an infected district, Col. Harper had taken the precaution to leave a light burning. Hearing an unusual noise below, he seized his pistols and stepped to the door, and while listening to learn the cause of his disturbance, he overheard the suppressed but earnest voice of the landlord on the stairs, urging the intruders not to ascend. Said he—“*For God’s sake, gentlemen, desist! for I tell you he is a soldier, terribly armed, and some of you must die before he will be taken!*” Expostulation was in vain, and the landlord was thrust aside by the tory party, which rapped at the door of his guest. With pistol in hand he opened it, *threatening death to the first man who should step over its threshold*. The intruders then made known to him the object of the visit, and the intrepid Harper, with a pistol in each hand, replied, “*I will be there in the morning, but attempt to take me there to-night at your peril!*” Seeing him thus armed, and knowing from the flash of his eye that his threat would be executed, the party quailed before him and withdrew. He again locked his door, and was not afterwards disturbed.

Col. Harper started next morning, about 8 o’clock, armed as on the night previous, with a sword and brace of pistols. Crossing Foxes creek bridge, which stood where the present bridge now stands, without any opposition, (some writer has erroneously stated that a Tory sentinel was on the bridge) he rode up to *Mann’s tavern*, as I have been credibly informed by an eye-witness,\* fastened his horse, and went in. He was in the house but a few minutes, came out, remounted, and started off on the Schenectada road, via. Duanesburgh, for Albany. He rode a small black mare, with a white stripe in the forehead, which started from the inn up-

\*David Warner, of Cobelskill. At the time alluded to, he states that he was a lad about ten years of age; that he then boarded with Capt. Mann’s father, and went to school near Foxes creek; that several boys, himself with the rest, had assembled after breakfast near the tavern to go to school. The morning was unusually pleasant. It was not usual, at that period, to see a stranger, with holsters, upon his saddle. Mr. W. also saw Col. Harper return next day with cavalry.

on a pace, struck a gallop near the top of the hill, and soon bore the rider out of sight. He had disappeared but a few minutes, before *five Indians* arrived at Mann's, and entered the cellar kitchen, followed by the boys, who were still at play in the street. Within half an hour, two of Captain Mann's horses, a black and a roan, were brought before the door, and two Indians, Seth's Henry,\* a tall, dark Schoharie chief, sometimes familiarly called Set, or Sethen Henry, and David, a small Indian, before noticed, mounted them, and started at a full gallop on the road Col. Harper had taken. The Indians, in pursuit were armed only with knives and tomahawks.



COLONEL HARPER CONFRONTING THE INDIANS.

For a distance of several miles, at that period, there was scarcely a house on the old Duanesburgh road. As Col. Harper drew near Righter's place, he discovered that he was pursued. Passing over a knoll, or turn in the road, which hid him from his follow-

\*The name of this Indian's father was Seth, and his own Henry ; he was known in the war by the name in the context.

ers, he dismounted, drew his sword from its scabbard, and stuck the point of it in a dry stump before him, and holding a pistol in each hand, ready cocked, he leaned back against his horse, and awaited the approach of the Indians, the tallest of whom he had already recognized. Riding at a rapid rate, and before they were aware of their proximity, they drew very near the object of their pursuit. The instant they saw him, they reined up, within reach of his pistols. Not choosing to risk a shot, he exclaimed in a voice and manner that carried terror to their savage breasts—*“Stop you villains—face about and be off this instant, or these bullets shall whistle through your hearts.”* The Indians, seeing him thus armed, dared not advance, and wheeling their horses, sullenly withdrew. It is said, however, that Set dogged him, at a respectful distance, a good part of the way to Albany. I have been enabled to be thus circumstantial, from having conversed with several individuals who received from Col. Harper’s own mouth the account of his pursuit soon after its occurrence, whose statements do not vary in anything material.

Col. Harper’s arrival in Albany, on Tuesday, August 12th, is thus noticed in the Journal of the Council of Safety the following day. Christopher Fiero stated to that body that one Du Boise, who left Albany the evening before, reported “That every road from Schoharie is obstructed and filled up by the Tories there; that Col. John Harper had escaped from thence, and that Col. Vrooman, with about twenty-five whigs, had fortified themselves in a house there.” Under the same date on the Council’s Journal, I find the copy of a letter written by that body, to Col. Pawling, on the subject of Gov. Clinton’s letters, previously inserted, which reads as follows :

“Sir—We enclose you two letters received from the Governor, by which it appears that he is very anxious to have the party detached for Schoharie. We have received information that Col. Vrooman, with a party of whigs, is besieged there by the Tories.

“It is necessary that he should be relieved immediately. You will therefore be pleased to issue your orders this night for two hundred drafts to be made from your regiment; after which you will, agreeably to the Governor’s directions, repair to this place,

and confer with the Council about the most practicable means of executing your plan.

"We are extremely sorry that so much precious time has already been lost by the miscarriage of your letter." [The above letter was signed by the President and forwarded by a light-horseman; after which the Council] "Resolved, That Gen. Scott, R. R. Livingston, and Maj. Tappan, be a committee to assist Col. Pawling in executing the secret expedition,"

Col. Harper, unadvised of the proceedings of Gov. Clinton and the Council, on his arrival in Albany, applied either to the Albany committee, or Col. Van Schaick, then in command of that military station—or, what is quite likely, to both—for assistance; and a small body of cavalry was granted him. The company consisted in rank and file of twenty-eight stout looking men.\* They were well-clad, wore caps, and made a fine military appearance. By whom they were commanded, the author has been unable satisfactorily to learn. The old citizens of Schoharie all assert that he was a Frenchman, and spoke imperfect English. The party, conducted by Col. Harper, left Albany in the evening, and riding a good part of the night, arrived in Schoharie early on Wednesday. One of the party had a trumpet, the first, probably, ever heard echoing among the mountains of Schoharie—an occasional blast of which is said to have carried terror to the hearts of the *evil doers*, and produced an effect equal to that of *an army with banners*.

On arriving at the *brick house*, a halt was ordered. Mine host hearing the warlike sound of the trumpet while it was yet a little way off, fancying no doubt that he heard his own death knell in every blast, fled to a barrack† of wheat on his premises, where he snugly ensconced himself beneath its sheaves; thinking, that

\* Col. Stone, who, in the *Life of Brant*, (see chapters 14 and 16, vol. 1,) has adopted Campbell's erroneous date of this transaction, placing it in 1778, gives the name of Capt. Woodbake as the commanding officer of the party. The Schoharie people say that was not the commandant's name. Stone also puts down their number at 200: but six or eight persons still living in different parts of the county *who counted them*, state their number to have been only twenty-eight.

† The word *barrack* is both German and Dutch. In the Schoharie and



"The man who lives to run away,  
May live to fight another day."

The commandant of the little squadron assumed a terrifying aspect, as, half drawing his sword, and rising in his stirrups, he demanded of Mrs. Mann, who had been summoned to the door for the purpose, in imperfect English, the whereabouts of her husband. The good woman, who should not at that time have been so frightened as to turn deadly pale, assured the speaker she could not inform him. In fact she did not herself know. The premises of the tory were then strictly searched for his person, even to the barrack in which he was concealed: and several troopers ran their swords down into the wheat sheaves beneath which he lay, without discovering him.

A small number of men who were found at the brick house, with some exceptions, submitted to the authority of the American officers, and destroyed their *royal protections*, with the promise of pardon for accepting them. A few who had been very active among the tories were however arrested, among whom was the malicious Indian, David; who had gained notoriety by his attempt on the life of Chairman Ball—his pursuit of Col. Harper, and the aid he had rendered the British cause in the capacity of messenger—he having just arrived from the camp of McDonald, when arrested. The troop then proceeded to the public house of Jacob

Mohawk valleys, much hay and grain was formerly deposited in barracks—indeed, such depositories are considerably used there at the present day. They are commonly made by erecting four upright poles or posts, so as to form a square, firmly set in the ground, or held at equal distances by timbers framed into them above the ground. The upper part of the posts is perforated with holes, and a roof, made of a quadrangular form, terminating in a vertex, rests upon wood or iron pins thrust through those holes. The roof is usually constructed by framing two timbers, crossing at right angles, and secured by side pieces, into which are framed four upright poles, firmly secured at the apex above. The roof is sometimes boarded and shingled, but usually thatched. When a barrack is to be filled, the roof is raised to the top of the corner posts, and the hay or grain in the sheaf is stacked beneath it: and as the contents are removed the roof is let down. Some barracks have a floor, and are so constructed as to last many years, subserving most of the purposes of a barn. They are generally built with four corners, but sometimes with more. Soldiers' huts are, by the French, also called *barracks*.



Snyder, a whig living a little distance east of Mann's to obtain refreshments; in the mean time the news of Col. Harper's arrival from Albany with troops having *wonderful music*, spread up and down the valleys of Foxes creek and Schoharie, with almost lightning rapidity. Leaving their work unfinished, the friends of *liberty* began to assemble, and many good citizens who had only been waiting to see a prospect of succor in case they espoused their country's cause, now did so cheerly. Stone's account of there having been a large body of tories, with scarlet patches on their hats assembled at Capt. Mann's, to whom that officer was making a speech on the arrival of Col. Harper and his party, needs authentication.

On the evening of the day on which Col. Harper left the *Stone House* to obtain assistance, McDonald and his followers descended the river to the residence of Swart, as stated in his diary, where they encamped over night; taking quiet possession of the premises, and helping themselves bountifully to the best the house afforded.

As soon as the steeds of the cavalry were rested, and themselves refreshed, quite a party of militia variously armed having already assembled, preparations were made to advance and meet the enemy, about six miles distant. The militia, some of whom were mounted and others not, were officered by Col. Harper for the occasion, and accompanied the cavalry. David, the Indian captive, was fastened by a cord around his wrist, to a fellow prisoner. The little army a few hours after its arrival in the valley, moved up the river, at the inspiring sound of the trumpet, which laughed among the *encrinital* and *trilobital* hills—and danced far away in the distance. Those who had been the most boisterous for King George, were, as if by magic, all converted into *Congress-men*; after hearing the voice of the vociferous Frenchman, and that of his musician speaking to his distant auditors with a *brazen tongue*. No musician ever rendered his country more *evident* essential service, unless perchance he was rivaled by *Anthony Van Corlear*, of Knickerbocker memory. At times the militia who were on foot, were obliged to take a

dog trot to keep up with the excited commander of cavalry, while the *sweat of the brow* as it coursed adown their sunburnt cheeks, denoted their blood to be at fever heat.

After proceeding about five miles, as the troops were passing an alder swamp, in Hartman's dorf, the prisoner David, watching a favorable opportunity, slipped the cord from his arm and ran into it. The party were halted, ordered to surround the marsh, and shoot down the captive if he attempted to escape. The mounted militia who knew the ground, led the cavalry round the swamp; and the Indian being observed skulking from tree to tree, and just ready to emerge in the direction of the river, was instantly brought down by a pistol shot in the back, with the exclamation, "*Ganno! ganno!*" The commanding officer, impatient at the delay, ordered one of the militia men to advance and shoot him. He was then lying partly upon his side, his head was resting upon his hand, and his elbow upon the ground, while his eye calmly surveyed his foes. George Shell, of Foxes creek, (who sometime after bravely assisted in the defence of Major Becker's house,) advanced from the ranks, presented his old fire-lock and *attempted* to fire. *Click, click, click*, said the old rusty lock—while its antiquated cylinder remained cold and silent. "*Tam te Meleshee guns!*" exclaimed the officer; as, riding forward, he snapped one of his own pistols, which missed fire, and ordered his troopers to shoot him. A pistol snapped by the man next the captain also missed fire, but that in the hand of his follower exploded, sending a bullet through the Indian's head. As those pistols were [snapped, the Indian turned round to avoid seeing them. He was left in his gore, and the party resumed their march. This Indian was the first person killed in the Schoharie settlements in the Revolution; and I have been thus particular in detailing the circumstances attending his death, because the manner of it as related in the *Life of Brant*, where he is misnamed *Peter Nickus*, is so very far from the truth as stated by several eye witnesses.\*

\* Jacob Becker, Jacob Enders, and George Warner, who were militia men present.

*David Ogeyonda*, although a notorious offender, would not have been slain had he not attempted to escape while a prisoner. The story of his having been "inhumanly hacked to pieces" by the cavalry, *is not true*. It is a well-known characteristic of the Indian, that whoever does an injury to one of his blood, incurs his hatred and revenge. This same Indian had several sons, who, knowing all the circumstances attending their father's death, not only remained friendly to the American cause, but Yon, probably the oldest, rendered the citizens of Schoharie no little service during the war.

On arriving at the Stone House, a ladder was raised against it, and the prisoners taken at Mann's were compelled to mount upon the roof, which was not very steep, when the ladder was removed, and they were placed in temporary and somewhat novel confinement. A squaw among them, is said to have rendered the situation of a prisoner, named Weaver, so uncomfortable, that he requested Jacob Enders to remove her.

The party had been at Middleburgh but a short time, when a woman by the name of Staats, known in the valley by the unpoetic cognomen of *Rya's Pup*, was seen approaching the Stone House in the direction of the river, nearly half a mile distant. She halted soon after being discovered as if hesitating about advancing, when the officer of cavalry beckoned to her to come forward; upon which she faced about and ran the other way. Two troopers were sent in pursuit, and captured her while fording the river; and each seizing a hand they turned their horses and rode back to the house, to the great amusement of its inmates, and discomfiture of the prisoner who was almost—*out of breath*. After panting a while, she was enabled to answer the interrogatories of the American officers. She said she had just come from the camp of McDonald—that his numbers were very great—and that he was then preparing to march down and capture the Stone House and its inmates.—*George Warner and Jacob Enders*.

On receiving this information, the troops were sent to collect several fences to aid in throwing up a temporary breastwork around the house, that they might be the better able to repel an

attack. After waiting sometime, however, for the appearance of the enemy, it was thought advisable by the Americans who were somewhat respectable in numbers, to proceed to meet him. On arriving near Swart's place, two miles distant from the Stone House, it was ascertained that the foes were on the retreat up the valley; and it was only by a rapid movement of the mounted troops that they were overtaken at the *Flockey*.\* At this place Adam Crysler resided before the war—it is now the residence of Samuel Lawyer. The house which is situated at the upper end of Vrooman's land, is pleasantly located upon a bank which slopes to the road. A brook or mill stream runs at the base of the bank near the road, between which and the river was formerly a small swamp. As the Americans drew near, they found McDonald had made a stand on the lawn in front of the house, prepared to give them a warm reception. A few shots only were exchanged, when the cavalry, at a long and terrifying blast of the *trumpet*, dashed impetuously among the Indians and Tories; who, panic struck, took to their heels and fled up the river. They were pursued but a short distance as the ground above was unfavorable for cavalry; besides, it was nearly dark, and the latter were much fatigued, having rode about forty-five miles since the evening before. David Wirt, lieutenant of the cavalry, was killed in this encounter, and two privates wounded, one Rose, mortally—who died three days after. Angelica, a daughter of Col. Vrooman, assured the writer in 1837, that she furnished the winding sheet for Lieut. Wirt—who was the first man that fell in Schoharie defending the principles of a free government. Wirt was shot as was afterwards learned, by one Shafer, a *royalist*. What loss the enemy sustained in this brush is unknown, few, however, chose to stay long enough to be killed. The cavalry returned to the Stone House and encamped for the night. As it was then supposed that madam Staats had been sent down by McDonald to afford him an opportunity to escape, she was sought for on the return of the Americans, but had *stept out*.—*Mattice Ball, Jacob Van Dyck and others.*

\* The name for this spot as known among the old inhabitants, and doubtless signified, *ground near a swamp*.

The enemy retreated up the river through Brakabeen, and by way of the Susquehanna laid their course for Niagara. *Judge Hager* states, that upwards of twenty male citizens went off from Vrooman's land, Brakabeen, and Clyberg (Clay hill,) with the enemy; among whom were Adam Crysler, Joseph Brown, several of the Boucks, Beckers, Keysers, Mattices, Freemires, William Zimmer, one of the Schoharie committee, one Shafer and one Kneiskern. He also adds, that while the enemy remained in Schoharie, *they doubtless lived well, as they were in a land of plenty.*

On the return of the light horse, as nothing appeared to criminate the father of Capt. Mann, who was inoffensive and considerably advanced in life, he was suffered to remain at liberty—and as the title to the *brick house* and valuable farm adjoining is said to have been vested in *him* and not his son, it was never confiscated to the republic.

Not long after the cavalry and militia had proceeded up the valley, Capt. Mann came down from his hiding place, crossed the river below the mouth of Fox's creek, and secreted himself under the Karighondontee mountain, at a place where a small stream of water has cut a ravine. The next day, David Warner, the lad before mentioned, and John Snyder, with a basket of food, went in pursuit of him. They crossed the river and followed up the ravine before named, just above which, seated in a cavity of the rock, they found the object of search, *smoking* a pipe and *fasting*; with an apology for a fire, a few brands smoldering in the recess. Mann had very wisely taken with him from home a tinder box and matches, as the chosen place of secretion was infested by *rattle-snakes*; and it being usually damp, was a cold place at night even in midsummer. The little nook in which Mann was found by his friends, is a familiar one to the Schoharie *geologists*, who have been there to obtain *strontian*, especially if they ever chanced to be there, as the writer once did, in a very heavy shower. The ravine alluded to, affords the geologist some of the most beautiful deposits of *fossil moss* found in Schoharie county.



When Mann heard his friends approaching, his fearful apprehension was aroused, but on hearing their familiar voices calling him by name, he readily discovered himself. From his mountain retreat, he shortly after went to Kneiskern's dorf, several miles further down the river, where he was concealed by friends until fall; at which time, he surrendered himself to the military authority established in the valley, by which he was transferred to Albany for trial. The following paper will show the time when Capt. Mann became a prisoner.

“*Schoharie, Dec. 8th, 1777.*”

Gentlemen of the committee:—We have taken it upon us to let George Mann come in, by a sufficient bail-bond, which we thought he could not get; but since he did, we would not affront the people, and took it; and if you think that it is not sufficient, let me know it, for I am ready now to act against the *tories* to the utmost point which is in my power, if the other committee are willing to join: if not, I will no longer be a committee man.

“Gentlemen, I beg one favor of you, which is, to give me intelligence in what form we are to act with the *tories* now: so no more at present.

“I remain, sirs,

“Your friend and well wisher,

“JOHANNES BALL.”

Owing to the great influence and respectability of his whig relatives and neighbors, Mann's trial was kept off until the war closed—when, a very liberal policy having been adopted toward those who had committed no very flagrant act, he was set at liberty, and returned home to the bosom of his family and the quiet possession of his property. From the fact that he surrendered himself a prisoner, instead of trying to flee to Canada, there can remain no doubt but that his views had undergone a change in regard to what course he should from the beginning have adopted. He had early, beyond a doubt, been warmly solicited by the friends of royalty, and the most flattering inducements, to advance their cause. But a life of repentance showed his error in judgment to have been of the *head* and not the *heart*,—while his firm and willing support ever after of the newly established order of things, fully atoned for his single offence.

From a long and intimate personal acquaintance with the descendants and other relatives of Capt. George Mann, I express

an opinion without fear of contradiction, that they are as patriotic citizens and as firm and consistent supporters of the federal constitution, as an equal number of men found in any other part of the American union.

The command of Capt. Mann's company, after his disappearance, was given to his lieutenant, Christian Stubrach.

Some individuals in the Schoharie settlements who had been persuaded to accept of kingly protection under McDonald, when the prospects of the colonies looked to them most gloomy, soon after his defeat and hasty flight, found means, in the confusion that ensued, to return home and become the supporters of the federal compact, while others followed his fortunes to Canada to await the speedy triumph of the British arms, when they expected to return and enjoy not only their own, but the confiscated property of their whig neighbors.

Letters from Colonels Harper and Vrooman, dated August 20th, 1777, were received by the council of safety, as appears by the journal of that body, and transmitted on the 29th to his excellency the governor, recommending him to provide five hundred troops—one hundred of whom to be riflemen—to protect the frontiers of Albany and Tryon counties: and under the date of August 30th, I find entered upon the council's journal, the following letter:

*“ Schoharie, August 28th, 1777.*

“ Gentlemen—Since we put Capt. McDonald and his army to flight, I proceeded with some volunteers to Harpersfield, where we met many that had been forced by McDonald, and some of them much abused. Many others were in the woods, who were volunteers; and as we could not get hands on those that were active in the matter, I gave orders to all to make their appearance, when called on, at Schoharie, in order to give satisfaction to the authority for what they have done; and if they do not, that they are to be proclaimed traitors to the United States of America; which they readily agreed to, and further declare that they will use their best endeavors to bring in those that have been the cause of the present disturbance. I would, therefore, beg the honorable council of safety, that they would appoint proper persons to try those people, as there will be many that can witness to the proceedings of our enemy, and are not in ability to go abroad.

“ From your most obedient, humble servant,

“ JOHN HARPER, *Colo.*

“ P. S. The people here are so confused that they do not know

how to proceed. I therefore would beg the favor of your honorable body to appoint such men as are strangers in these parts. "To the honorable, the council of safety, at Kingston."

The above letter was referred to a committee who reported on the same, September 1st, and the council ordered the following letter written to Col. Harper in reply, under that date—

"SIR—Your favor of the 28th of August last, was received and communicated to the council. They congratulate you on the success of our arms in that quarter, which must be doubly grateful to the brave inhabitants of Tryon county, whose virtuous exertions have so greatly contributed to it.

"The trial and punishment of those inhuman wretches who have combined with a savage foe to imbrue their hands in the blood of the innocent, demands a speedy attention. But while the council agree with you in the impropriety of removing them to any distance from the witnesses of their guilt, they can not consent, nor indeed are they empowered to institute any new court for the trial of such offences. These wicked parricides, however detestable, are nevertheless, by our free constitution, entitled to the inestimable privilege of a trial by their peers. A court of oyer and terminer will be held in your county [Albany county meant—Col. Harper was then a resident of Tryon county:] as soon as the present storm hath a little subsided. In the mean time the public officers of the county will exert themselves to detect, apprehend and secure the rebels.

"You will be pleased to communicate this letter to the committee of Schoharie, and to such other persons as may be concerned in it."

The following letter directed to "*The Commissioners for Sequestrings for Tryon County*," and found among the papers of Col. Fisher, one of those commissioners, was from a member of the New York council of safety.

"*Kingston, 31st August, 1777.*

"Gent.—The enclosed resolution was thought necessary, that you may have it in your power to remove the women and children to such place (if even it should be to the enemy,) as you with Gen. Yates may think proper. Should you want any thing farther, you will please to let the House know. I wish you health and spirits in these trying times—which we will all get over; and that it may be soon, is the prayer of Gent, your most hum'e serv't.

"ABM. YATES, Jun."

[The resolution above alluded to]—"Resolved, That the commissioners for sequestrating the effects of persons gone over to, or

who are with the enemy, be directed immediately to seize the effects of all such of the inhabitants of the counties of Albany and Tryon, as are gone over unto and joined the enemy, and to dispose thereof, agreeably to the resolutions in that case made and provided. That the said commissioners be empowered to remove the wives and children of such disaffected persons aforesaid from their habitations, to such place or places as they shall conceive best for the security of the state. That the said commissioners (if Gen. Gates shall think it advisable) be empowered to send all or any part of the said women and children to their said husbands."

On the council's journal under date of September 5th, I find the following entry—

The committee to whom was referred the petition of William Cameron and the other six prisoners brought by Maj. Wynkoop's party from Schoharie, delivered in their report, which was read, amended and agreed to, and is in the words following, to wit: 'That it appears from the said petition of William Cameron and the six prisoners brought with him as aforesaid, that they have, contrary to the resolutions of this state, aided and assisted the enemies thereof, by taking up arms against it, and therefore that they be confined in irons in one of the jail rooms at Kingston.' "

The above no doubt refers to the prisoners captured by the cavalry which accompanied Col. Harper to Schoharie. In alluding to this transaction, the Rev. Daniel Gros, in a work on Moral Philosophy, published about the year 1806, thus observes—

"Neither must it be forgotten that Lieut. Wallace, Wm. Wills and John Harper, who at that time of general distress on our western frontiers, when two hundred royalists and Indians had advanced into the heart of Schoharie, where treachery, assisted by the panic with which the inhabitants had been struck, had almost accomplished a total defection among them, with forty men, collected in a strong brick house, [stone house,] braved the enemy, hindered the defection from taking the intended effect; and afforded time for succor, by which the whole design of the enemy was defeated, and a valuable part of the frontier preserved."

On the 13th of August, the same day on which Col. Harper so opportunely led troops to Schoharie, Lt. Col. Schermerhorn proceeded to Norman's kill with a body of Schenectada militia, and forty Rhode Island troops,—in all about one hundred men,—to root up a tory gathering at that place. The expedition was very successful; David Springer, a noted royalist, was killed, thirteen

of his comrades captured, the remainder dispersed, and confidence again restored, where all was doubt and disaffection, without the loss of a single man on the part of the Americans.—*John J. Schemerhorn, son of Col. S. named in the context.*

In the fall of this year the following resolution was made public :

“ADVERTISEMENT.—This is to give notice to all persons, that the Committed of Schoharie have *Resolved* that nobody shall sell any thing to disaffected persons, and especially to such persons as buy and send it to the Scotch settlements [on the Charlotte and Susquehanna rivers;] and if any person does it, we shall seize it.

“By order of the committee,  
“*Schoharie, Nov. 24th, 1777.* JOHANNES BALL, Ch’n.”

The citizens of Schoharie were engaged in the fall in transporting provisions to the army under Gen. Gates, as the following will show.

“*Half Moon, 18th Oct., 1777*: Received of Jacob Cuyler, Esq., D. C. G. of P., [deputy commissary general of provisions] sixty-six barrels and two tierces of flour, containing 131c. 3qr. 8lb.—tare 1471, in seventeen wagons, which I promise to deliver to Dirck Swart, D. C. of P. at Stillwater, having signed two receipts of the same tenor and date. JOHANNES BALL.”

About twenty of Mr. Ball’s neighbors were engaged with their teams in conveying the flour mentioned, as appears by another certificate in possession of the writer.

The following anecdote will serve to show the patriotism of the late *patroon*, Stephen Van Rensselaer. When the troops under Gen. Gates were opposing Burgoyne near Saratoga, Gen. Ten Broeck, who was the guardian of the *patroon*, then in his minority, visited some of his nephew’s tenants near the Helleberg, and requested them to take all the provisions and grain they could spare (reserving a bare competency for their families,) to the American army. Several emptied their granaries, pork-barrels, cattle-stalls and pig-styes, and delivered their effects to the commissary department at Saratoga; not expecting any usual reward for so doing. Some time after, to their surprise, the young *patroon* invited those tenants to Albany and *presented them with valid titles to their lands.* Such was one of the many acts of that good



man, distinguished through life for his generosity and benevolence.\*

When news first reached Schoharie that the British had been defeated at Bennington, the tories believed it a falsehood, told to excite their fear.

In the Revolution, that part of Sharon contained in the town of Seward, was called New Dorlach. It was a settlement of twenty-five or thirty families, only four of which, those of Jacob Hynds, William Hynds, Bastian France, and William Spurnbeyer were active whigs. An old man named Hoffman, who took no part on either side, was, with his whig neighbors, made an object of savage cupidity. When St. Leger was besieging Fort Schuyler, about thirty individuals went from this settlement and united with his forces. When the siege was raised, they would gladly have returned to their homes, but were compelled to go to Canada; only two came back at that time, and they deserted in the night.—*Henry France, son of Bastian France.*

In the summer of 1777, when the several British commanders were proceeding towards Albany, some of its citizens, fearing the enemy would reach that city, secreted their money. A man named Ten Eyck buried a tin cup full of gold and silver in his cellar. After Burgoyne's surrender, search was made in vain for this treasure; one Jacob Radley dug the ground floor of the cellar all over without finding it, and the superstitious notion obtained in the family, that it had disappeared through supernatural agency. Here is a *spook story* for the credulous. The cup had been removed by *animam viventum*—a living soul.—*Judge Brown.*

The surrender of Burgoyne to Gen. Gates, which took place after the other British enterprises in New York had proved abortive, diffused joy and gladness throughout the union. In Albany, the event was celebrated with much display. An ox was roasted whole for the occasion. A pole passing through it and resting on crotches served as a spit, while a pair of cart wheels

\* *Frederick Vogel*, to whom the facts were communicated after the war, by Frederick Crounse, one of the tenants alluded to in the context.

at the ends of the pole were used to turn it. A hole was dug in the ground, in which, beneath the ox a fire was made. While cooking, several pails of salt water were at hand, to be applied with swabs to keep the meat from burning. When roasted it was drawn through the principal streets, and the patriotic secured a good slice. A constant roar of artillery was kept up during the day.

The aged met with joy of heart,  
The youthful met with glee;  
While little children played their part,  
The happiest of the three.

In the evening almost every dwelling in the city was illuminated. A pyramid of pine fagots which had been collected for the occasion, in the centre of which stood a liberty pole supporting on its top a barrel of tar, was set on fire on the hill near the city early in the evening. When the fire reached the tar, it not only illuminated every part of the city, but sent its ominous light for many miles around, presenting a most imposing effect.\*

To show the enthusiasm that prevailed during the celebration above related, I insert the following incident. *Evert Yates*, of Montgomery county, who then lived in Albany, assured the writer that he, with several young friends, was without the city firing muskets in honor of the happy event. After firing a good many loud guns they returned home—when he found to his great surprise, his gun was half full! The party, as often as they had loaded, fired together; and he continued to load, not doubting

\* The author is indebted to *Mrs. Henry France* of Seward, who was a resident of Albany at the time, for the manner in which this event was celebrated; and also for the following narrative: Her father, John Horne, was a butcher in Albany previous to the French war. In the early part of that war, he with six other Albanians, went up the Hudson in a batteau with merchandize to trade with the Indians for furs. Landing at some place and leaving their boat in which were their weapons of defence, they were proceeding a little distance from it, when, as they were crossing a small bridge a party of seven armed Indians, who had been sometime watching their motions, sprang out from under the bridge and made them captives. As they all had prisoners, each Indian at night took care of his own, and Horne, watching his opportunity after traveling several days with his new master,

but his old fusee went off—too much excited to discover the increasing length of his ramrod.

The following anecdote was told the author by *Jacob Van Alstyne*, who was at the taking of Burgoyne. He was then adjutant of a regiment of Rensselaer county militia, under Col. Stephen J. Schuyler, Lieut. Col. Henry K. Van Rensselaer, and acted in the two-fold capacity of adjutant and quarter-master. Col. Schuyler was a brother of Gen. Philip Schuyler, and having the oldest commission among the colonels on that station, he acted as brigadier general in the latter part of the campaign. A German, named John Tillman, a portly gentleman who resided at Albany after the war, acted as German interpreter for Gen. Gates, and was requested by the latter to select a proper person to go into the British camp as a *spy*; the object of whose mission was, *to circulate letters among the Hessian soldiers*, to induce them to desert, and to bring on an engagement in such a manner as Gates desired. Tillman selected Christopher Fisher,\* a private in Col. Schuyler's regiment—a shrewd fellow and always ready with an answer to any question that might be asked him. Fisher, being well acquainted with my informant, visited him to ask his advice in the hazardous undertaking, naming the reward offered. The latter told him what the consequence would be if he was detected, but declined giving counsel. "Well," said Fisher, "if you will not advise me how to proceed, then I must act on my own

effected his escape when the party were all asleep. He went a short distance and secreted himself in a hollow log. As soon as his absence was discovered, several of the enemy pursued him; and he in his concealment heard them pass and repass, hallooing to each other. After their return he directed his course to the Mohawk, and at the end of eight or nine days journey through the forest, in which time he suffered much from hunger and exposure, he reached the bank of West Canada creek, and discovered an Indian and squaw upon its opposite shore. He called to them to come to him, but they did not move until he held up a piece of money. The Indian then sent the squaw in a canoe after him. He obtained food from them, who proved to be of a friendly tribe, and in a few days more reached home in safety; but it was a long time before his comrades in the perilous enterprize all returned.

\* Fisher was a native of Schoharie county, of German origin, and had removed to Rensselaer county just before the war.

judgment:" so saying, he took his leave of Van Alstyne, who thought but little more of the matter until after the battle, which occurred October 7th. While in his tent after that engagement, Fisher entered and showed him *a purse of gold and his discharge from the service*. Van Alstyne then desired to know how he had proceeded. Fisher stated that on the day appointed, he approached the enemy's picket with a sheep upon his back, which had been killed for the occasion. He was hailed by the guard, who demanded of him his residence and the object of his visit. Fisher replied, that he lived a few miles back in the country—"that the *d—d Yankees* had destroyed all his property but *one sheep*, which he had killed, and was then taking to *his friends*." On hearing this reply, the sentinel treated him kindly, and delivered him over to an officer with a favorable report. In the British camp, he was asked by a superior officer, what proof he could give that he was not deceiving. Said Fisher, "the *rebels* are preparing to give you battle, and if you will go with me, I will convince you of its truth." The officer followed Fisher to a certain place, from which was visible a wood. Here had been stationed, agreeable to the order of Gates, a body of Morgan's rifle corps, who were to exhibit themselves in a stealthy manner. The rifle-men wore frocks and were easily distinguished. "There—there"—says Fisher, "dont you see them devils of Morgan's dodging about among the trees?" And sure enough, as fast as the spy directed his vision, the British officer could see the moving frocks of the American rifle-men. When urged to enlist into the British service, Fisher pretended an aversion to war, pleading also the necessity of returning home to protect his family against the *rebels*. He was allowed to leave the camp when he chose, and embraced the opportunity while the armies were engaged. He was, however, admitted into communion as a genuine royalist, and being allowed to mingle for several hours with those who spoke German, he discharged the duties of his perilous mission to the satisfaction of Gen. Gates. A party of British troops were sent to dislodge the rifle-men pointed out by Fisher—a general engagement followed, and the result is known to every American

reader. Burgoyne capitulated soon after. The *spy* executed faithfully the principal object of his hazardous enterprise, and many of those Hessian soldiers deserted the British service in that campaign, and either entered the American service, or became good citizens of New York. Mr. Van Alstyne died in May, 1844, aged nearly 95 years.

Gen. Fraser, a distinguished officer in the British army, was looked upon by some of the Americans as a more dangerous leader to oppose than Burgoyne himself. Several published accounts state that such was the opinion of Col. Morgan. During the engagement of October 7th, it fell to the fortune of Morgan's rifle corps to meet in battle the troops under Fraser. Morgan selected a few of his best marksmen, who were placed in a favorable position, and instructed to make Fraser their especial mark. Timothy Murphy, who afterwards went to Schoharie, was one of the riflemen selected to execute this unholy design. The party thus stationed had each a chance to fire, and some of them more than once, before a favorable opportunity presented for Murphy; but when it did, the effect was soon manifest. The gallant general was riding upon a gallop when he received the fatal ball, and after a few bounds of his charger, fell, mortally wounded. The fact that Murphy shot Gen. Fraser, was communicated to the writer by a son of the former.

A letter dated Amherst, Mass., Oct. 7, 1835, and first published in the *Saratoga Sentinel*, introduces a new competitor for the *honor*, if such it was considered, of having slain Gen. Fraser. The letter is from the pen of E. Mattoon, Esq., being a reply to an interrogatory letter of a preceding date, from Philip Schuyler, Esq., a son of the late Gen. Schuyler. Mr. Mattoon expresses his belief, in the letter, that Gen. Fraser was killed by an old man with a long hunting gun, and not by one of Morgan's men. There can be no doubt but that the old gentleman to whom he alludes, shot an officer, but that he killed Gen. Fraser I cannot believe, since not only Murphy was positive he fell before his rifle, but several authors have stated that Fraser told his friends after he fell, *that he saw the man who shot him, and that he was*



*a rifleman posted in a tree.* The remains of Gen. Fraser were taken to England after the war.

After Gen. Burgoyne had resolved on retreating from Saratoga to Canada, Gen. Nixon, of the First Massachusetts brigade, succeeded in gaining Fort Edward in his rear; and the first intimation the retreating hero, who was to march through the colonies with three British regiments, had that his retreat was cut off, was from hearing the evening gun fired at that fortress. As its thunder came booming along the valley of the Hudson, borne upon the evening breeze, it sounded in his unwilling ears the knell of his military glory.—*Capt. Eben Williams.*

David Elerson, who was a private in Capt. Long's company of Morgan's rifle corps, and compatriot of Timothy Murphy in many hazardous enterprises, related the following anecdote to the author in 1837. Morgan's riflemen had acquired much celebrity as marksmen while under Gen. Gates. When in the vicinity of Albany, on their return from the northern army, a gentleman near whose residence they halted, expressed a wish to witness their skill. The captain signified his willingness to gratify his curiosity, and a piece of paper was fastened upon a small poplar tree. Elerson handed his rifle, one of the best in the company, to John Garsaway, who, informant said, *took a surer aim than himself.* The rifle was leveled 100 yards distant from the mark and fired. The leaden messenger passed through the paper and the tree—splitting the latter several inches, and *ruining it.* Said the gentleman, looking at his crippled tree, which had almost been converted into a weeping willow (it will be remembered that fashion then made the *poplar* a very desirable shade tree) "I do not wonder the Indians are afraid of Morgan's riflemen, if that is the way they shoot." He then treated the company to liquor, as was the custom of the times—expressed his satisfaction at their skill, as he again cast his eye upon his blasted poplar, and the troops resumed their march.

Maj. Stephen Watts, the brother-in-law of Sir John Johnson, was left mortally wounded on the Oriskany battle-ground; and as an American soldier named Martin G. Van Alstyne was passing

him, he was addressed by the dying royalist, who begged of him to be borne to a stream of water at a little distance off; saying that he could not survive his wounds, but that the crystal element would afford him a little comfort in his dying moments. He was carried to the place indicated, and presented Van Alstyne with his watch as a reward for his services. Watts survived his wounds but a few hours. The watch Van Alstyne would never part with in his lifetime, although offered several times more than its real value by a friend of the Watts family, who were very desirous of obtaining a keepsake of their deceased kinsman.—*Joshua Reed.*

Col. Hendrick Frey, (a colonel of colonial troops under Sir William Johnson in the French war,) a wealthy royalist who resided during the revolution in a large stone house\* one mile above the present village of Canajoharie, was at home, as he feigned neutrality, and on the day after the Oriskany battle a party of hostile Indians levied a tax on his hospitality. As they assembled around a table to eat, a sister of Frey who was waiting upon them, discovered on the person of one, the shirt of Maj. John Frey, their patriotic brother—one sleeve of which had been perforated by a bullet and left very bloody. Her worst fears were aroused, and nearly letting fall something she held, she ran to her brother Hendrick, placed her hands on his shoulders and exclaimed in a tone of real sorrow "Brother John is dead!" assigning as her reason for such belief the sight of the bloody trophy before them. The colonel who could speak the Indian dialect well, desired his sister not to show any emotion before the Indians; and endeavored to quiet her fears by remarking *that probably the shirt had belonged to some one else.* The agitated maiden could not be persuaded into such a consoling belief, as the garment had been the workmanship of her own hands; and her mental agony seemed almost insufferable.

In a short time the Indians left the house, and proceeded down the river, followed at a little distance by Col. Frey, who was de-

\* This house took fire in the night, from a deposit of ashes, and burned down about the year 1832.

sirous of knowing the fate of his brother. Near the mouth of the Canajoharie creek he overtook them, and inquired of the possessor where he got the shirt which covered his brawny frame. He replied that he had wounded an officer the day before in the Oriskany contest, in an arm which he had exposed from behind a tree, had made him his prisoner, and after taking from him such portion of his clothing as he desired, had sold him to a British officer who would probably take him to Canada. Frey hastened home and communicated to his sister what he had learned, which tended somewhat to calm her agitated mind, for to know that he still lived, although a wounded prisoner, was some consolation. Maj. Frey was taken to Canada, suffering much on the way, and while there confined ; a durance which lasted nearly two years.—*J. Reed.*

The timely sortie of the brave Willet on the camp of the besiegers at Fort Schuyler, caused their comrades engaged in the crimsoned fields of Oriskany, to withdraw and leave the militia of the Mohawk valley victors of the field. The Indians, who were among the last to leave, had mostly disappeared, and the firing had nearly ceased, when Capt. John James Davis remarked to Isaac Covenhoven, a soldier who stood behind a tree near to the one which concealed himself—"I believe the red devils have pretty much all left us!" "I don't know," said C. "there may be some of them lurking about yet." The words were scarcely uttered when Capt. D., who was a brave and meritorious officer, fell mortally wounded ; a bullet from the rifle of an Indian having passed through his lungs.—*Isaac Covenhoven.*

Capt. Jacob Gardinier, of the Tryon county militia, was distinguished for his daring bravery and personal acts in this terrible conflict. Some account of this officer's exploits in that battle are very properly related in the *Life of Brant*. The Rev. Daniel Gros, in his work on "Moral Philosophy," to which I have alluded, in some of his remarks on civil liberty, while speaking of the moral obligations of free citizens to act in defence of their country, referring to that battle, thus observes: "Let it stand recorded among other patriotic deeds of that little army of militia, that a

Jacob Gardinier, with a few of his men, vanquished a whole platoon, killing the captain thereof, after he had held him for a long time by his collar as a shield against the balls and bayonets of the whole platoon. This brave militia captain is still alive, and was cured of *thirteen* wounds." After being literally riddled by bullets and bayonets, Capt. Gardinier crept into a cavity at the roots of a fallen tree, and continued the fight. He had with him a German lad, as a waiter, who then became very useful, bringing to his master, guns of the fallen, loading such as were not loaded, &c. He was so wounded that he could neither stand or load his own gun, and yet from his place of temporary safety, he did no little execution. Observing an Indian stealthily dodging from tree to tree to get a shot at an American officer, upon whom he had brought his rifle several times with partial aim, Capt. G. shot him, and sent his *High Dutch boy*, as he called him, to get his gun. The lad returned with a report that the Indian *was not dead, but was kicking*. He had fallen across a log with his feet up, and was probably in the death struggle. After a few minutes, the boy was again sent, and soon returned with all the Indian possessed save his dead carcase.

Capt. Gardinier, who was a blacksmith before the war, and resided near the river opposite Caughnawaga, had in his employ a man named Henry Thompson, a native of New Jersey. He was a tall, lank looking fellow, as odd as he was ungainly. He was in the Oriskany battle as a private under his employer, and after the conflict had lasted some time, and groans and death were rendered familiar, he approached the captain and told him he was *hungry*. "*Fight away!*" said the intrepid officer. "*I cant without eating,*" said Thompson. "*Then go and get you a piece,*" was the reply. He did so—sat down in the midst of the battle, on the body of a dead soldier, and ate heartily, while the bullets were cutting the air around his head like hail-stones. Having finished his repast, he arose and fought with renewed energy, appearing in the thickest of the fight. Such an evidence of cool bravery, to gratify hunger, I believe was never excelled, if before equalled.



Samuel Gardinier, a brother of Jacob, was also in the post of danger at Oriskany. He had two balls shot into his body just above the groin. They were fired from opposite directions almost at the same instant ; and so near did they lodge that when an incision was made to one, the other was visible, and both were taken out together. He recovered and lived several years after the war was over. The bullets were evidently fired from fowling guns, and are treasured as sacred relics by his descendants.—*Anecdotes from Rynier, a son of Samuel Gardinier.*

Valentine Fralick, of Stone Arabia, was a militiaman at Oriskany. In the heat of battle, a little aside from the main army, William Merckley, a neighbor of Fralick, fell near the latter, by the shot of an Indian, mortally wounded. The former kindly offered to assist his wounded friend, but the assistance was declined. “*Take care of yourself, and leave me to my fate,*” was the wounded man’s reply. Fralick, seeing several Indians approaching, instantly sought shelter under a fallen tree, and while thus concealed, they passed and repassed over the tree, in search of, but without finding him. When the immediate danger was over, he returned to the body of his comrade, who had been tomahawked and scalped, and giving it a temporary burial, he sought the American camp.—*John, a son of Valentine Fralick.*

During one of the earliest invasions of the Saratoga county settlements by the enemy, (probably in 1777,) the following singular incident occurred. A party of Canadian Indians arrived just at night at the house of Angus McDermott, a Scotchman, who had but recently arrived in the country. The soldiers were helping themselves to whatever the house afforded to eat and drink, when all at once the floor gave way, and they were precipitated into the cellar. No one was seriously injured, and the jollification was continued there. The Indians kept the family within doors, so that their arrival should be unknown in the neighborhood, and scattering about the settlement early in the morning, they commenced their diabolical deeds of destruction and death.—*Angus McKinlay.*



It has been said of the brave Gen. Herkimer—who was hurried into the Oriskany conflict through the rashness of his young officers, several of whom called him a tory for his prudence, and soon after lost their own lives—that after he was wounded, and no longer able to remain upon his horse, his saddle was placed against a tree, upon which he sat down, and from whence he continued to issue his orders. While thus seated, he took from his pocket a tinder-box, and with his pocket-knife and a flint arrow-head, which he carried for the purpose, he lit his pipe and smoked it with as much apparent satisfaction as he would have done in his own house. Gen. Herkimer was taken to his residence—a large gambrel-roofed brick building, still standing a little distance from the canal, two miles east of Little Falls, where he lived several days.



GEN. HERKIMER'S HOUSE, DANUBE.

After the battle of Oriskany, a song, commemorative of the event was composed, and for a long time sung in the Mohawk valley, of which the following is a stanza :

“ Brave Herkimer, our General, 's dead,  
And Col. Cox is slain;  
And many more, and valiant men,  
We ne'er shall see again.”

In June, 1777, Congress resolved to establish a corps of invalids, consisting of 8 companies, each to have 1 captain, 2 lieuten-

ants, 2 ensigns, 5 sergeants, 6 corporals, 2 drums, 2 fifes, and 100 men, to be employed in garrison duty. A company of this kind was formed in Schoharie in the fall of 1777, or early in 1778, of which Tunis Vrooman, who had served in the French war, was appointed captain, Peter Snyder and Martinus Vrooman lieutenants, and John L. Lawyer its ensign. This company, which was mostly in the vicinity of the Upper Fort, was called in Schoharie, the "*Associate Exempts.*"

In the fall of 1777, Congress adopted thirteen articles of confederation; Maryland was the last state to adopt them. In November, Forts Mifflin and Mercer, which prevented the passage of British shipping to Philadelphia, were taken by the enemy, after a severe loss on their part, and a most gallant defence of them by Colonels Greene, Smith, and Simms, and Maj. Thayer, and the enemy entered that city in triumph, where they wintered. About the same time Washington went into winter quarters at Valley Forge, Pa., fifteen miles northwest of Philadelphia, where his army erected temporary huts, but their sufferings were most acute from a want of nearly all the munitions of war. The winter was a very severe one, and the American soldier might daily be traced by his own blood! Nothing but an unconquerable love of Liberty, deep-rooted and steadfast, could have induced men to continue in the American service.—*Allan, and Tallmudge's Journal.*

The following anecdote will not only show the true piety of Gen. Washington, but the power on which he relied for the final success of his suffering country. While the American army was in camp at Valley Forge Isaac Potts, a respectable Quaker, who had often seen Washington going to, or returning from a grove at a little distance from his own dwelling early in the morning, had the curiosity to learn the object of those visits. Entering the thicket one morning very early, he secreted himself; soon after which the American commander advanced to a retired spot near him, and upon his knees offered a fervent prayer to the God of battles for the triumph of patriotic principles. Soon after, Potts returned home: his wife observing his thoughtful countenance, thus said to him—"Isaac, something moves thee I per-

ceive." "Yea, Sarah!" he replied, "I never believed until this morning that a *soldier* could be a *Christian*." He then related what he had witnessed and remarked, "that such prayers as George, the Virginian offered, must prevail; and that England never could subdue her colonies."—*Capt. Eben Williams*.

In the course of this year, (1777) Gov. Tryon became almost a savage—sending out parties to burn buildings and wantonly destroy the property of many inoffensive colonists. When remonstrated with by Gen. Parsons, he declared that had he more authority, he would burn every committee-man's house within his reach, and expressed a willingness to give *twenty silver dollars* for every acting committee-man who should be delivered to the King's troops.—*Allan*.

The preceding paragraph will show the reader the reason why the county called Tryon, was afterwards given the name of the *immortal Montgomery*, in whose veins coursed *the very best of Americanised Irish blood*.

The year 1777 was one of alternate hopes and fears to the American people. They had witnessed with gratitude the success of their arms in northern New York—while several forts along the Hudson had been captured by the enemy, and the battles of Brandywine and Germantown had been followed by disaster. In April of this year, it should not be forgotten, a new impulse was given the cause, by the opportune arrival, with several of his countrymen, of the *brave, noble hearted, generous Lafayette*: who not only bared his own breast to the storm in its fury, but who, with a magnanimity that put sinister nature to the blush, *threw into the exhausted treasury of the nation, his ample fortune—burying beneath it the scabbard of his sword*. Let that patriot who glories in being an American, love and venerate the virtues of Lafayette as did Washington; and let him remember, too, that this country should ever be a home for the oppressed of every land, for good men of other lands aided in establishing its freedom. With many other gallant foreigners, a *DeKalb* and *Pulaski* mingled their life-blood with that of a *Warren*, a *Woodhull*, a *Montgomery*, a *Herkimer* and *Mercer*, to water the shriveled roots

of the tree of liberty—while a *Lafayette*, a *Kosciusko* and a *Steuben*, prompted to deeds of noble daring, aided more fortunately in sustaining the American flag.

It was during the year 1777, that an attempt was made by foul *intrigue*, to supplant Gen. Washington and promote Gen. Gates to the chief command. Several officers of rank favored the Gates' party, among whom were Generals Mifflin and Conway—the latter an Irishman—and several members of Congress. Anonymous letters, reflecting on the character and military skill of Washington, were put in circulation. Mr. Laurens, president of Congress, and Patrick Henry, one of its master spirits, communicated to Washington the character of his foes and the nature of their design. Happily for the country, the machinations of this unholy ambition recoiled upon the heads of its instigators. Conway found it necessary to resign his commission. This subject matter afterwards originated a duel between Conway and Gen. Cadwallader. After the duel, the former, thinking himself mortally wounded, expressed to Gen. Washington by letter, his deep regret for the part he had acted in the Gates transaction, adding his own testimony to the many virtues of the Commander-in-chief.—*Bancroft's Washington and Wirt's Henry*.

The following romantic incident is copied from the journal of Col. Tallmadge. In December, 1777, when the British army was at Philadelphia and the Americans under Washington were at Valley Forge, Major Tallmadge was stationed between the armies with a detachment of cavalry, for the purpose of observation, and to circumscribe the range of British foraging parties. The duty was an arduous one, the horses being seldom unsaddled, or the squad remaining all night in the same position, from fear of a visit from the enemy, which on one occasion they received with the loss of several men. While on this duty, says the journal :

“ Being advised that a *country girl* had gone into Philadelphia with *eggs*, instructed to obtain some information respecting the enemy, I moved my detachment to Germantown, where they halted, while with a small party I advanced several miles towards the British lines, and dismounted at a small tavern called the *Rising Sun*, in full view of their out posts. Very soon I saw a young fe-



male coming out from the city, who also came to the same inn. After we had made ourselves known to each other, and while she was communicating some intelligence to me, I was informed that the British light horse were advancing. Stepping to the door, I saw them at full speed chasing in my patrols, one of whom they took. I immediately mounted, when I found the young damsel close by my side, entreating that I would protect her. Having not a moment to reflect, I desired her to mount behind me, and in this way I brought her off more than three miles, up to Germantown, where she dismounted. During the whole ride, although there was considerable firing of pistols, and not a little wheeling and charging, she remained unmoved, and never once complained of fear after she mounted my horse. I was delighted with the transaction, and received many compliments from those who became acquainted with the adventure." [The journal does not say at whose instigation this heroine had visited Philadelphia, but Gen. Washington was doubtless her employer.]

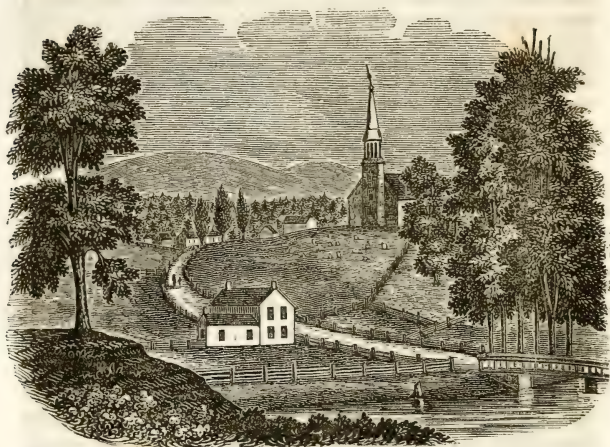
Three forts were erected in the Schoharie valley, the central being the first one built. It was known during the Revolution as the *Middle Fort*, and stood on the farm now owned by Ralph Manning, about half a mile east of north from the Middleburgh bridge. It was constructed in the fall of 1777, by the citizens and soldiers—the former drawing together suitable timber, and the latter, with their aid, giving it a proper place. The two story stone dwelling, owned and occupied by John Becker—the kitchen part of which is still standing—was inclosed within the pickets of the fort.

The *Upper Fort*, situated five miles west of south from the middle fort, was commenced in the fall of 1777 and completed the summer following. The one story frame dwelling of John Feeck was there inclosed within the pickets. This fort stood not far distant from the present site of Murphy's mill, in the upper end of Vrooman's land.

The *Lower Fort*, situated six miles north of the middle fort, was begun and completed about the same time as was the upper fort. The *stone church*, still standing one mile north of the Court House, was there inclosed within the pickets. The two latter forts were built as was the former, by the joint labor of citizens and soldiers. The middle fort was known as *head quarters* during the war, where usually resided the principal commandant of all three, and



at which place, the business involving the welfare of the settlement, was generally transacted.



ANCIENT DUTCH CHURCH, SCHOHARIE, AS SEEN IN 1817.

The *Lower Fort* consisted of an inclosure by strong pickets of about half an acre of ground, embracing the stone church, (a view of which is here given,) with block-houses in the south-west and north-east corners mounting small cannon. Along the west side of the inclosure, small huts were erected of rough boards for the summer residence of the inhabitants in that part of the valley; with a board roof sloping from near the top of the pickets toward the centre of the yard. Each family which claimed the protection of the small garrison at this place, had such a rude dwelling, in which were deposited their most valuable effects. Near the north-east corner, or in that part of the inclosure toward the burying-ground, was a temporary tavern kept by Snyder, a former inn-keeper of that vicinity. The *Middle Fort* was an inclosure of an area of ground rather larger than that picketed in at the lower fort, with block-houses in the north-east and south

west corners, where cannon were mounted. The principal entrance was on the south side, and on each side of the gate were arranged the soldiers' barracks. The pickets, as at the fort below, were about a foot through, and rose some ten feet from the ground; with loop holes, from which to fire on invaders. A brass nine pound cannon was mounted on the south-west block-house, and an iron one at the diagonal corner, each of which, as the block-houses projected, commanded two sides of the inclosure; while along the eastern and western sides were arranged huts for citizens, similar to those at the lower fort. The *Upper Fort* stood on the west side of the river, and as at those on its opposite side, a fair plot of ground was inclosed. One side of this inclosure was picketed in, while on its other sides a breast-work was thrown up of timbers and earth, some eight or ten feet high, and sufficiently thick to admit of drawing a wagon upon its top, with short pickets set in the outside timbers of the breast-work. A ditch surrounded the part thus constructed. Military barracks and small log huts were erected within the inclosure, to accommodate the soldiers and citizens. Block-houses and sentry-boxes were built in the north-west and south-east corners, each mounting a small cannon to guard its sides. From its construction, this fortress, probably, better merited the name of *fort* than either of the others; although some have stated that a moat partially surrounded the middle fort.

## CHAPTER IX.

Much that transpired in the American revolution of the most thrilling interest, not only in Schoharie but in all the frontier settlements, is now lost forever, to the American reader. To adopt the language of a beautiful writer—"Many prudent counsels conceived in perplexing times—many heart-stirring words uttered when liberty was treason—many brave and heroic deeds, performed when the halberd and not the laurel was the promised meed of patriotic daring, are already lost and forgotten in the graves of their authors."

The capture of Burgoyne and his army not only inspired Americans with confidence of their final triumph, but the truly philanthropic all over the civilized world hailed the event as ominous of good. *Fortune* is a fickle goddess. Let *success* attend the ambitious adventurer, and a sycophantic world is ready to rend the air with shouts of praise, and strew his path with flowery garlands; but if *misfortune* attend him, his imagined *friends* are changed to *foes*. It is probable that few leaders under similar circumstances could have done more for his royal master than had poor Burgoyne; and yet on his return to England, he was treated with contempt by the parasites of royalty.

Early in 1778, mortified at the result of her Canadian expeditions, England sought a reconciliation with the states. Lord Chatham, known at an earlier period in the House of Commons as the talented Pitt, the champion of civil liberty, attended on one occasion in the House of Lords during the session of that year. He was desirous of a compromise, but opposed to acknowledging

our independence. While laboring to show how the difficulties could be settled, his emotions overcame him and he sunk nerveless into the arms of his friends. He was carried home—survived his last effort to speak but a few weeks, and his grave oratory was hushed forever. The *love of country* rose paramount in the last effort of this truly great man. Parliament passed an act that session declaring that they would not in future again tax the colonies, and commissioners were sent to treat with the state authorities. The terms proposed by the mother country were rejected. An attempt was then made to bribe some of the influential American statesmen, but the proposition met with deserved scorn.

Early this season the French nation, which had looked with jealousy upon England after the loss of the Canadas, concluded a treaty of commerce and alliance with the American commissioners. It was signed on the 6th of February. The acknowledgment of the independence of the United States by France, had a very beneficial tendency. It was greeted every where as the passport to independence, consequently every demonstration of joy was manifested. The treaties were read by the chaplains at the head of each brigade—published in the colonial papers, and made known from the sacred desk by ministers of the gospel, from Maine to Georgia. Many who were before wavering in their course, when they saw a powerful nation becoming their *ally*, manifested a willingness to exert themselves in their country's cause.

The rich *flats* along the Cobelskill at the out-break of hostilities, contained some 20 families in the distance of three miles, believed to have been all *whigs*. They organized a company of militia for their own defence, of which Christian Brown (a brother of the late Judge Brown) was captain, and Jacob Borst, lieutenant: but had erected no fortifications. The first appearance of the enemy in the Schoharie settlements in 1778, was at Cobelskill. The events which transpired there, were communicated to the author by *Nicholas* and *George Warner* brothers, *Lawrence Lawyer*, and *Judge Brown*. The three former were in the battle fought in that town. In the latter part of May several straggling

Indians were seen in the vicinity of that settlement, and Capt. Brown, anticipating a hostile movement of the enemy, thought it prudent to send to the fort at Middleburgh for assistance. The lower fort was not quite completed at that time. Captain Patrick was dispatched with a small company of volunteers, and arrived at the residence of Capt. Brown on the 26th of May, where they remained until the 28th, when they moved up to the dwelling of Lawrence Lawyer. Scouts were kept out constantly, but nothing worthy of notice transpired until that day, when Lieut. Borst, his brother Joseph, and one of the Freemires were on a scout some miles up the creek. The latter was several hundred yards from his companions, seated upon a pile of drift-wood, fishing, when two Schoharie Indians, Ones-Yaap and Han-Yerry (the latter a chief) with a savage yell, intended to intimidate, sprang up the bank of the creek from a place of concealment and approached them. After a friendly salutation, they began to reprove the brothers, *for being in the woods, to shoot Indians who did them no harm*. Joseph replied to the speaker, that they intended no harm to those who were friendly. Han-Yerry approached him, seized his gun in a playful manner, threw open the pan, and gave the gun a sudden jerk to spill out the priming, exclaiming as he did so, *Yo yenary hatste!* signifying—*It is good if this be gone!* Borst, seeing the object of the Indian was to disarm him, instantly dropped his own gun and seized that of his adversary, and wrenching the flint from the lock, he replied in the Indian dialect, *Yo yenary sagat!* *It is good if this is served so!* The Indian then dropped his gun and clinched Borst, but the latter, giving a loud whoop closed manfully with his antagonist and soon brought him upon his knees. While they were struggling for mastery, the other Indian approached the lieutenant and bade him surrender himself his prisoner: but instead of doing so, he stepped back and sent a bullet through his body. Han-Yerry succeeded in freeing himself from the grasp of his adversary, and seeing his comrade upon the ground, instantly fled leaving his gun. The lieutenant ran and caught up the gun of his brother and snapped it at the fleeing Indian, but as it was not primed the



latter escaped. On the same day, George Warner and John Fester returned from Cherry-Valley, where they had been the day before to carry a letter—doubtless to apprise that settlement of the proximity of the enemy.

The day after the Borsts had the rencounter with the Indian scout, the Cobelskill battle was fought; which occurred on Saturday the first day of June.\* On the morning of that day Captain Miller, who was sent from the Schoharie fort with part of a company to reconnoitre, arrived at Lawyer's. Several of his men, one of whom was named Humphrey, volunteered to remain with Patrick, and he returned to the fort, before the enemy in force were discovered. The regulars under Capt. P. numbered between 30 and 40; and the militia volunteers under Capt. Brown were 15. After Capt. Miller left Lawyer's, the troops under Patrick marched up the creek to the residence of George Warner, who was one of the Schoharie committee, and father of the namesake before mentioned. Warner's was the southernmost house in the settlement, and stood on a knoll at Cobelskill Centre. An orchard at this time covers the site.

The troops had been at Warner's but a short time, when 15 or 20 Indians discovered themselves a little distance above the house, and the whole force was marched in pursuit of them. Brown was opposed to the pursuit, and told Patrick he feared they would be ambuscaded. The latter ridiculed the idea, and was disposed to assign another motive than that of *caution* to the militia cap-

\* Several writers who have published some notice of this battle, have given it an erroneous date. Brown, in his pamphlet history, says it transpired "on the first day of June or July, in the year 1776," but at a personal interview he said that date was wrong, and that it took place on *Saturday before Pinkster, the year after Burgoyne's capture*. Campbell, in the *Annals of Tryon County*, dates it in May, 1779. Stone has entered it in two places in the *Life of Brant*, supposing from Brown's account and one he found among the papers of Col. Gansevoort, as they differed in dates and material facts, that he was recording two transactions. The last notice he accredits to a letter from Col. Varick to Col. Gansevoort, dated Schenectada, June 3, 1778, which letter stated that this invasion of the enemy took place on the preceding Saturday. This last date corresponds with the one given the author by the three living witnesses named, who stated that it took place on Saturday preceding Pinkster—Whitsunday, which came that year on the 2d day of June.

tain who, stung by the imputation, then yielded to the wishes of Patrick, notwithstanding the misgiving of his own better judgment. The enemy, who kept up a running fight, had not been pursued a mile, before it was evident their numbers were increasing. A halt was then made by the Americans near the present residence of Lambert Lawyer, with the militia on the right towards the creek, and a sharp engagement followed. Both parties fought in the Indian style, under the cover of trees. It soon became manifest from the firing, that the number of the enemy was very great. After several of his men had fallen around him, Capt. Patrick received a shot which broke his thigh. Two of his brave soldiers, in an attempt to bear him from the field, were surrounded by a party of the enemy, and shared his unhappy fate. A lieutenant under Capt. Patrick is said to have been spared, by giving a masonic sign to Brant. When Capt. Patrick fell, Brown ordered a retreat, which was most timely, for had it been delayed but a few minutes until the enemy could have extended his flanks, so as to surround the little band of patriots, few if any would have survived that day. The families in the settlement, hearing the firing, very properly sought safety in the depths of the forest, or by a rapid flight to Schoharie, ten miles distant. On arriving at the house from which they had been so artfully drawn into an ambush designedly laid, *three* of Patrick's men and *two* of Brown's took refuge within it, which providentially favored the escape of their fugitive friends. Being fired on from the house, the Indians halted to dislodge its inmates, by which the rest of the party gained time sufficient to make good their retreat. The house was set on fire, and three of its inmates were buried in its ruins. The continental soldiers, in attempting to make their escape from the burning building, were slain. One was evidently shot, but the other was supposed to have been taken alive and tortured to death. The party who first visited the scene of blood after the battle, found this soldier not far from where the house had stood, with his body cut open and his intestines fastened round a tree several feet distant. In one hand was a roll of continental bills, placed there by the enemy in derision of our country's *almost valueless*

*"promises to pay."* It was subsequently known, that the enemy fired at least *fifty* balls into one window of this house, at its inmates.

The names of the men under Capt. Brown in this engagement were, Lieut. Jacob Borst, Nicholas Warner, George Warner, jr., George Freemire, John Shafer and Lawrence Lawyer, who escaped uninjured, 6 ; John Zeh, Martinus and John Fester, Jacob and John Freemire and Jacob Shafer, killed, 6 ; Peter and Henry Shafer and Leonard King, wounded, 3. The whole number killed in the engagement, including Capt. Patrick and his men, was about 22 : five or six of his men were also wounded and two were made prisoners. More than half the Americans engaged were either killed or wounded. The enemy, as was afterwards ascertained, consisting of Indians (mostly Senecas, Schoharies and Oquagos, instead of Onondagas as stated by some writers) and torries, numbered over three hundred and fifty, and were commanded by *Joseph Brant*. Service, a noted tory, who lived near the Charlotte river, and the Schoharie chief, Seth's-Henry, acted a conspicuous part in the engagement. The loss the enemy sustained was never exactly known, but was supposed to equal, if it did not exceed that of the Americans. A mulatto, who was with the enemy at this time and returned after the war, stated that twenty-five of their number, mostly Indians, were buried in a mud-hole near David Zeh's. He also stated, that seven of the enemy who were wounded in the battle, died on their way to Canada. George Warner's was the first house burnt in the Schoharie settlements in the revolution. The enemy, after the engagement, plundered and burnt all the dwellings in Cobelskill as far down as the churches, except an old log house, formerly occupied by George Warner, which stood near the present residence of his son David. This house was left, as was afterwards supposed, with a belief that its owner might return and occupy it, after losing his framed dwelling, which would afford an opportunity to capture a committee-man. The dwellings burnt at this time were those of George Warner and his son Nicholas, George Fester, Adam Shafer, William Snyder, John Freemire, Lawrence Lawyer, John

Zeh, John Bouck and John Shell; (the latter owned by Lawrence Lawyer,) in all, *ten*, with the barns and other out-houses; making, as stated in the record of the Lutheran Church at Schoharie, "*twenty buildings burned.*"

The two militia-men who took shelter in the house of Warner, were Martinus Fester and John Freemire. The remains of Fester fell into a tub of soap in the cellar, and were known by his tobacco-box; and those of Freemire were identified by his knee-buckles and gun-barrel. Jacob Shafer was wounded in one leg early in the action, and was carried by his neighbor, George Warner, jr., to a place of temporary safety, who agreed to get a horse and take him to the fort. As the battle terminated unfavorably, he was left to his fate—was discovered next morning by the enemy and killed. The remains of John Fester were not discovered, until a piece of wheat was harvested, into which he had fallen. Jonas Belknap, one of Patrick's men, received a ball in his right hip and was borne out of the battle by *Lawrence Lawyer*, as the latter assured the author. The following additional facts respecting this soldier, who died a few years since at Gorham, Ontario county, were told the author by *Ezekiel Howe*, a nephew of said Belknap. After having been "carried one side," to use the words of Lawyer, Belknap discovered a hollow log into which he crept. The next day he backed out of his resting place cold and stiff, and while seated upon a fence, reflecting on the events of the last twenty-four hours, he discovered two Indians laden with plunder approaching him, having two dogs. Unobserved by them, he let himself fall into a bunch of briers. The Indians halted near him, and their dogs placed their paws on the fence and growled. He supposed himself discovered, but soon one of them took out a bottle, from which both drank, and he had the satisfaction of seeing them resume their march, without noticing the irritation of their canine friends. Casting his eyes along the beautiful valley and surveying the ruins of the preceding day, he discovered the old house of Warner, on the west side of the creek, still standing, to which he made his way. He found it unoccupied, but victuals were on a table, and after eating, he laid down, faint and sad, up-



on a bed which the house also afforded. In the afternoon, two men came and conveyed him to the Schoharie fort, where his wound was properly drest and he recovered.

Henry Shafer, mentioned as being wounded in this engagement, received a ball in his thigh which brought him to the ground. The bone was not fractured, but the limb was benumbed. He regained his feet but fell the instant his weight came upon the wounded limb. Disencumbering himself of his gun and powder-horn, after several unsuccessful attempts to run, action returned to the limb and he fled. He directed his steps toward Schoharie, and on the way fell in with Peter Snyder, his brother-in-law. They traveled nearly to Punchkill together, when Shafer, too weak to proceed, concealed himself and requested his comrade to inform his friends at the fort where he might be found, desiring them to come after him. His fellow-traveler went to the fort, but instead of doing the errand as desired by his wounded relative, he reported him *dead*. Shafer tarried beneath a shelving rock until Monday morning, when, by great exertion, he arrived at the house of a friend in Kneiskern's dorf. As he was much exhausted, he was very prudently fed gruel until he revived, when he was taken to the fort and cured of his wound.—*From Peter, son of Henry Shafer.\**

The night after the Cobelskill battle it rained, and a dreary one it must have been to the surviving citizens of the Cobelskill valley, many of whom were in the forest to which they had fled from their burning dwellings, exposed to the mercy of wild beasts—foes less to be dreaded than those left behind. The wife of Lawrence Lawyer, with several other persons, was in the woods *three days*, and finally came out near the mouth of the Co-

\* Mr. Shafer lived to become a very useful citizen. He was for many years a justice of the peace—frequently represented Cobelskill in the board of supervisors—for several years was a member of the state legislature—and was for a great length of time a judge of Common Pleas ; which several stations, considering his early opportunities, he discharged with credit to himself and fidelity to the public. He was remarkably punctual in the performance of his official duties. He died on the 15th of April, 1839, in the eighty-second year of his age.



belskill. Scouts were sent out to reconnoitre and look after the wounded, and absent members of families, but it was several days before the dead were buried. Some day in the course of the week following the engagement, Col. Vrooman with part of the Schoharie troops, and Col. Yates with a detachment of Schenectada militia, went to perform the last sad duties to those martyrs to the cause of *liberty*. As the weather had been wet and cool, the bodies were found to have suffered but little change. A pit was dug near where George Warner's house had stood, into which several boards were laid: the charred remains of the three soldiers taken from the cellar, and the mutilated remains of those near, were then buried within it. Pits were also dug so as to require as little moving of the bodies as possible, in which Captain Patrick and the other soldiers were deposited. None can realize at a period of nearly seventy years after it transpired, the solemnities of that burial. Several of the deceased left wives and children to mourn their untimely fate; while all left friends who had centered on them hopes of future usefulness and aggrandizement. This blow was a most severe one for the little settlement of Cobelskill. Peaceful be your rest brave warrior! for

“ When ye sank on your bed of death,  
 No gentle form hung over you ;  
 No fond eye caught your parting breath,  
 Or shrunk in anguish from the view !  
 But o'er you, in that hour of fate,  
 Bent the dark ” *Indian's* “ vengeful form ;  
 And the stern glance of ruthless hate  
 Gleamed dreadful, 'mid the hurrying storm.  
 No mourning dirge did o'er you swell,  
 Nor winding sheet your limbs inclosed ;  
 For you was tolled no passing bell ;  
 No tomb was raised where you reposed,  
 Your bed of death—the battle ground,  
 'Twas there they heaped your funeral mound,  
 And all unhallowed was your grave,  
*Save by the ashes of the brave.*”—*Lines on Waterloo.*

On the knoll where stood the house of George Warner, which was burnt in the Revolution, as before stated, the patriotic citizens of Cobelskill celebrated the anniversary of our national indepen-

dence, on the 4th day of July, 1837. An appropriate oration was delivered on the occasion by *Demosthenes Lawyer, Esq.*

How proper, after so long a time, *to assemble on that day, on ground consecrated by patriot's blood, and water it with the tear of gratitude.*

A few days previous to the irruption of the enemy into Cobelskill, they were in the vicinity of Cherry Valley. Brant had his destructives there with the intention of laying waste that place. He secreted them on Lady hill,\* about a mile east of the fort, to await a favorable opportunity to strike the fatal blow, and slay or capture some of its influential citizens. A company of boys happened to be training, for boys then caught the martial spirit, as Brant, like the eagle from its eyry, was looking down from his hiding place upon the devoted hamlet. Mistaking these miniature soldiers for armed men, he deferred the attack for a more favorable opportunity. After killing Lieut. Wormwood, a promising young officer from Palatine, who had left the fort but a few minutes before on horseback, and taking Peter Sitz, his comrade, prisoner,† Brant directed his steps to Cobelskill.

On the 4th day of July, 1778, the beautiful valley of Wyoming in Pennsylvania, fell a prey to the savage cupidity of the British, Tory and Indian forces under Col. John Butler; and its inhabitants were either killed, carried into captivity, or escaped by a most appalling flight. The poem entitled "*Gertrude of Wyoming*," from the pen of the English poet *Campbell*—founded upon the tragedies of that massacre—is doubtless familiar to most of my readers. Many of the most unfeeling and inhuman acts of cruelty committed on the fleeing inhabitants and soldiers of this ill-fated place, were committed by *tories*. On this occasion, a tory found a brother secreted, who had been an American militiaman, but had fled, abandoning his gun. On recognizing his brother, the tory said to him, "*So it is you, is it?*" The unarmed

\* This hill was embraced in a patent owned by a rich lady in England, from which circumstance it was formerly called Lady Hill.—*Moses Nelson.*

† For the death of Lt. Wormwood and capture of Sitz, see *Annals of Tryon County.*

man approached his kinsman, fell upon his knees and besought him to spare his life; promising, if he would, to live with him and become his *servant*. "*All this is mighty fine,*" replied the human fiend, "*but you are a d—d rebel!*" At the close of this sentence, he leveled his gun and sent the death-telling ball through his body.—*Chapman's History of Wyoming.*

About the first of September of this year, the enemy destroyed several of the western settlements on the south side of the Mohawk. In a letter written at one of the frontier posts, by Col. Klock to Gov. Clinton, and sent by "Col. Fisher and Zep. Batchellor, Esq.," probably in September (it being without date,) he thus observes—

"I beg leave to represent to your Excellency the most deplorable situation of this country. The enemy have from time to time desolated and destroyed the settlements of Springfield, Andreas-Town, and the German-Flats; by which at least *one hundred and fifty families* are reduced to misery and distress. People who were in flourishing circumstances are thus, by one wanton act, brought to poverty.

"Notwithstanding I have repeatedly wrote our situation down and asked relief, we have obtained none except Alden's regiment, which is stationed at Cherry-Valley, where they remain in garrison. Woful experience teaches us that the troops in Cherry-Valley are by no means a defence for any other part of the country. [After speaking of the ungovernable spirit that influenced the conduct of some of the settlers, the desertion of a part of the militia to the enemy, and the necessity of immediate succor, he adds]—From the information we are able to collect from prisoners and otherwise, we learn that the enemy when at the German-Flats were 500 or upwards strong, commanded by Capt. Caldwell—that they intended soon to make another incursion, and that a reinforcement of 5 or 600 was on its march to join the enemy."

During the invasions above noticed, nearly 1000 horses, cattle, sheep and swine were killed or driven away. The settlers at the German-Flats, by receiving timely notice of danger, with one single exception, fled into the neighboring forts and escaped the tomahawk. The loss of so many dwellings, with most of their furniture, and barns well filled with the recompense of the husbandman's toils, must have been a most serious one to this district.

Capt. Walter Butler was a son of Col. John Butler, a justice of

the king's court for Tryon county, who resided, at the commencement of the war, about a mile from the ancient village of Caughnawaga. He went with the *royalists* who left the county in 1775, to Canada. In the summer of 1778, he returned to the Mohawk valley—was arrested, and confined in the Albany jail. Under the pretence of ill health he was removed to a private dwelling, from which, aided by treachery, he escaped. Burning with revenge for his imprisonment, on his arrival in Canada he obtained command of a part of his father's regiment of tories called *Butler's Rangers*; and with them directed his steps towards the frontier settlements of New York. On his way he met Brant returning to Canada from his Mohawk river expedition, who reluctantly joined him in his enterprise. Their united forces were 500 Indians, and 200 tories, worse than Indians. On the morning of Nov. 11th, they surprised Cherry-Valley, killing 32 of the inhabitants and 16 continental soldiers, among whom was Col. Alden, the imprudent commander of the garrison, who is said to have been a man of intemperate habits. Nearly all the dwellings and barns in the settlement—just filled with an abundant harvest, were burned, and—

House-less were those who from the wood returned,  
The fate of relatives to mourn;  
While other friends to *living death*, they learned,  
By *human fiends*, were captive borne.

The enemy, making between 30 and 40 prisoners at Cherry-Valley, passed down the Susquehanna to its junction with the Tioga—up the latter to near its source, thence along the Seneca lake to the Indian castle at Kanadaseago, near the present village of Geneva; where a division of the prisoners took place. The day after the massacre, 200 militia arrived at Cherry-Valley, and buried the dead.\* The sufferings of the prisoners on their way to Canada, must have been very severe: many of them were women and children, illy fitted to endure the fatigues of a journey of three or four hundred miles, at that inclement season.

\* For a more minute account of the destruction of this place, see *Campbell's Annals of Tryon County*.



The following anecdote was related by Joseph Brant after the Revolution, to John Fonda while at his house near Caughnawaga. Brant, on being censured by Fonda for his cruelties at Cherry-Valley at the time of its desolation, said the atrocities were mostly chargeable to Walter Butler. He then stated that among the captives made by him at that place, was a man named Vrooman, with whom he had had a previous acquaintance. He concluded to give Vrooman his liberty, and after they had proceeded several miles on their journey, he sent him back *about two miles, alone*, to procure some birch bark for him; expecting of course to see no more of him. After several hours Vrooman came hurrying back with the bark, which the chieftain no more wanted than he did a pair of goggles. Brant said, he sent his prisoner back on purpose to afford him an opportunity to make his escape, but that he was so big a fool he did not know it; and that consequently he was compelled to take him along to Canada.—*Mrs. Evert Yates, a daughter of John Fonda.*

The English government on being officially informed of the treaty of alliance between France and the United States, declared war against the former; and thought it prudent to concentrate its forces. On the 18th of June, the British troops under Sir Henry Clinton evacuated Philadelphia, and set out for New York. Gen. Washington hung upon his rear, watching a favorable opportunity to give him battle. On the 28th of that month, the battle of Monmouth was fought. Both armies were flattered during the day by alternate success, and encamped in the evening on the battle ground. Washington slept in his cloak after the fatigues of that day, in the camp of his brave men. In the night, Clinton silently withdrew, thus conceding the victory of the preceding day to the *spangled banner*. The loss of the Americans in this engagement was from *two to three hundred* in killed and wounded; and that of the enemy about *one thousand*, nearly half of whom were killed. The day on which this action was fought was extremely hot, and the suffering of both armies was very great for the want of proper drink. Says the *Journal of Col. Tallmadge*, "Many died on both sides from excessive heat and



fatigue, the day being oppressively warm, and the troops drinking too freely of cold water." *James Williamson*, a soldier who assisted in burying the dead after the battle, assured the writer that he saw around a spring in a grove not far from the battle-field, *the dead bodies of twelve soldiers, supposed to have been victims of cold water.*

American historians have recorded few instances of female patriotism and bravery, which rival the following: In the battle of Monmouth a gunner was killed, and a call was made for another, when the wife of the fallen soldier, who had followed his fortune to the camp, advanced and took his station; expressing her willingness to discharge the duty of her deceased husband, and thus revenge his death. The gun was well managed and did good execution, as I have been informed by an eye witness. After the engagement, Gen. Washington was so much pleased with the gallant conduct of this heroine, that he gave her a lieutenant's commission. She was afterwards called *Captain Molly*.—*Capt. Eben Williams.*

A short time after the battle of Monmouth, Lieut. Col. Wm. Butler, with the 4th Pennsylvania regiment, and three companies of *rifle men* from Morgan's corps under Maj. Posey, commanded by Captains Long, Pear and Simpson, was ordered to Albany, and from thence to Schoharie. While there he commanded the Middle Fort. The command of the Schoharie forts devolved on Col. Peter Vrooman during the war, when no continental officer of equal rank was there.

Among the rifle men who went to Schoharie at this time, were some most daring spirits—men whose names should live forever on her fairy mountains and in her green valleys. We do not believe it necessary, although it is a fact too generally conceded, that glittering epaulets are indispensable in forming a *hero*. Of the brave soldiers sent to aid the Schoharie settlers in their defence, and guard from savage cruelties the unprotected mother and helpless orphan, whose names I would gladly chronicle could I collect them, were Lieut. Thomas Boyd, (whose tragic

end will be shown hereafter,) Timothy Murphy, David Elerson,\* William Leek,† William Lloyd, a sergeant, John Wilber,‡ — Tufts, Joseph Evans, Philip Hoever,§ Elijah Hendricks, John Garsaway, a very large man, and Derrick Haggidorn. Nor should we forget to name several of the native citizens who encountered many dangers in the discharge of their duty; of the latter were Jacob and Cornelius Van Dyck, Jacob Enders, Bartholomew C. Vrooman, Peter Van Slyck, Nicholas Sloughier, Yockam Folluck, Joackam Van Valkenberg,|| Jacob Becker, and Thomas Eckerson. There were no doubt others equally meritorious, whose deeds are unknown to the writer.

The following facts, relating to the attempted arrest and death of Christopher Service, a tory of no little notoriety, living on the Charlotte river, were communicated by *Judge Hager*, *Mrs. Van Slyck*, and *David Elerson*.

The people of Schoharie had long suspected Service—who remained with his family entirely exposed to the enemy—of clandestinely affording them assistance. Captain Jacob Hager, who was in command of the Upper Fort, in the summer of 1778, sent Abraham Becker, Peter Swart, (not the one already introduced,) and Frederick Shafer, on a secret scout into the neighborhood of Service, to ascertain if there were any Indians in that vicinity, and to keep an eye of espionage on the tory. They arrived in sight of his dwelling after sundown, and concealed themselves in the woods, intending to remain over night. After dark the mosquitoes began to be very troublesome, but the party did not dare

\* He was married in Schoharie during the war, and became a permanent resident of the county. He was a *ranger* for several years, and, as he stated to the writer, an extra price was set on his own and Murphy's scalps by the enemy. He was 95 years old at our interview, at which time he was boarding with Dr. Origin Allen, near the Baptist church in Broome, of which the old hero was a member.

† Went west after the war, and died in Cayuga county.

‡ Was from Reddington, Pa. He was a carpenter by trade, married a Miss Mattice and settled on Charlotte river.

§ Remained in Schoharie county after the war.

|| Killed in battle near Lake Utsayuntho, in 1781.

to make a fire to keep them off. Becker told his companions he was well acquainted with Service, having lived near him for some time ; said he would go and reconnoitre, and if there were none of the enemy abroad, he would inform them, in which case all agreed to go to the house and tarry over night. Becker, after a short absence, returned with the assurance that the "coast was clear," and that he had made arrangements for their accommodation ; whereupon all three went to the dwelling. As they approached the door, the light was extinguished, but Becker went in, followed by his friends. They advanced to the centre of the room, at which time one of the family re-lit the candle, the light of which showed Swart and Shafer their real situation. Along the wall, upon one side of the room, were arranged a party of armed savages, who instantly sprang upon, and bound them. The two prisoners were kept there until morning, when they were hurried off to Canada. Becker, who had not been bound, was suffered, after giving the Indians his gun and ammunition, to depart for home. He returned to the fort, and reported that the scout, near Charlotte river, had fallen in with a party of Indians in ambush, from whom they attempted to escape by flight ; that he was in advance of his comrades, who were both captured ; that he came near being overtaken, when he threw away his gun and equipage, and thus relieved, made his escape. Shafer, who remained in a Canadian prison until the war was closed, returned to Schoharie and made known the above facts. Swart never returned to Schoharie. He was taken by distant Indians, as his friends afterwards learned, beyond Detroit, where he took a squaw and adopted the Indian life.

From the commencement of the border difficulties, Service had greatly aided the enemies of his country, by sheltering and victualing them, in numerous instances. He was comparatively wealthy, for the times, owning a well-stocked farm and a grist-mill. When the tories and Indians from Canada were on their way to destroy the settlements, they always found a home at his house, from whence, after recruiting, they sallied forth on their missions of death. Several attempts were made to take him before the Schoharie committee, previous to his joining Brant in his expedition against Cobelskill.

Soon after the return of Becker with his hypocritical narrative, Col. Butler sent Capt. Long with some twenty volunteers in the direction of Charlotte river to reconnoitre, and if possible discover some traces of the enemy. One object of the expedition was, to arrest Service and take him to the Schoharie forts, or to slay him in case of resistance. Arriving near the head waters of the Schoharie, Capt. Long unexpectedly took a prisoner. On his person he found a letter directed to Service, and on opening it, learned that Smith, its author, a tory captain who had enlisted a company of royalists on the Hudson near Catskill, was then on his way to the house of Service, who was desired in the letter to have every thing in readiness to supply the wants of his men on their arrival. Learning from their prisoner the route by which Smith would approach, the Americans at once resolved to intercept him. Some fifteen or twenty miles distant from the Upper fort, while proceeding cautiously along the east side of the river, Smith and his followers were discovered on the opposite bank. Capt. Long halted his men, and proposed to get a shot at Smith. It was thought by some of the party an act of folly to fire at so great a distance, but the captain, accompanied by Elerson, advanced and laid down behind a fallen log. Some noise was made by this movement, and the tory chief stepped into an open piece of ground a little distance from his men to learn the cause of alarm, and thus fairly exposed his person. At this moment the rifles were leveled. Capt. Long was to fire, and in case he missed his victim, Elerson was to make a shot. At the crack of the first rifle, the spirit of Smith left its clay tenement to join kindred spirits; but where—God only knows. The scout then advanced and poured in a volley of balls, wounding several, and dispersing all of the tories. Thus unexpectedly did justice overtake this company of men, whose zeal should have led them to serve their country instead of her foes.

Capt. Long and his companions then directed their steps to the dwelling of Service. On arriving near, proper caution was taken to prevent his escape, and Murphy and Elerson were deputed to arrest him. They found the tory back of his house, making a



harrow. On the approach of the two friends, Mrs. Service, suspecting the object of their visit, came out and stood near them, when they informed her husband the nature of their visit. Service called them *d—d rebels*, and retreating a few steps, he seized an axe and aimed a blow at the head of Murphy. But the man who could guard against surprise from the wily Indian, was not to fall thus ignobly. Elerson, who stood a few feet from his companion, as he assured the author, *told Murphy to shoot the d—d rascal*. The wife of Service, seeing the determined look of Murphy, caught hold of his arm and besought him not to fire. He gently pushed her aside, and patting her on the shoulder said, "*Mother, he never will sleep with you again.*" In another instant, the unerring bullet from his rifle had penetrated the tory's heart. Capt. Long and his men now advanced to the house, in which was found *forty loaves of fresh bread*, proving that some notice had already reached there, of Smith's intended visit. Many have supposed that injustice was done to Service. The author has taken considerable pains to inform himself on this point, and finds proof most satisfactory to his own mind, that from his ability and willingness to supply the wants of the enemy and his retired residence, he was a very dangerous man to the cause of liberty.

An old tory, who returned after the war, and died a few years ago in the town of Mohawk, was accustomed, when intoxicated, to "hurrah for king George." At such times he often told about being in person at the house of Service, who, as he said, "lived and died a tory, as *he* meant to." Had not Service made an attempt on the life of Murphy, he would probably have been confined until the war closed, and then liberated, as was the case with several wealthy royalists. The property of Service was confiscated in the war. Not many years ago, a son of his succeeded in recovering the confiscated property of his father, and thus came into the undivided possession of an estate amounting to eight or ten thousand dollars. The fortune thus obtained, however, was soon dissipated.

In the latter part of August, 1778, the Lower Fort, but recently completed, was commanded by Lieut. Col. John H. Beeckman.



Early in October, Col. Butler proceeded from Schoharie with the troops under his command, to Unadilla and Oquago, Indian towns on the Susquehanna, which they effectually destroyed, with large quantities of provisions.

The troops under Col. Butler, in this excursion, among whom were several volunteers from the Schoharie militia, suffered incredible hardships. "They were obliged to carry their provisions on their backs; and, thus loaded, frequently to ford creeks and rivers. After the toils of hard marches, they were obliged to camp down during wet and chilly nights without covering, or even the means of keeping their arms dry."—*Dr. Ramsay*. After an absence of sixteen days, they were greeted with a hearty welcome at the forts in Schoharie.

A regiment of New York state troops, under Col. Duboise, went into winter quarters at Schoharie, in the fall of 1778. Adj. Dodge, Maj. Rosencrans, Capt. Stewart, and Ensign Johnson, of Duboise's regiment, were quartered in the kitchen of Chairman Ball's dwelling.—*Peter Ball*.

On the 6th of August of this year, M. Gerard was publicly received by the United States government as minister of the king of France. On the 14th of September following, Dr. Franklin was appointed minister to France, the first American minister delegated to a foreign court.

"The alliance of France gave birth to expectations which events did not fulfil; yet the presence of her fleets on the coast deranged the plans of the enemy, and induced them to relinquish a part of their conquests."—*Hale*.

The reward paid by English agents for the scalps of the Americans, *eight dollars each*, excited the avarice of both Indians and Tories; and many innocent women and children were slain not only in this, but in the several years of the war, to gratify the cupidity of a merciless and unfeeling enemy.

Late in the fall, the army under Washington erected huts near Middlebrook, in New Jersey, and went into winter quarters. In December of this year, Mr. Laurens resigned his office as president of Congress, and John Jay was chosen in his place.

CHAPTER X.

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Early in the spring of 1779, two men named Cowley and Sawyer, were captured near Harpersfield, by four Schoharie Indians; Han-Yerry, who escaped from the Borsts the day before the Cobelskill engagement, Seth's-Henry, Adam, a sister's son, and Nicholas, also a relative. One of the captives, was a native of the Emerald Isle; and the other of the green hills of Scotland. They were among the number of refugees from Harpersfield, who sought safety in Schoharie at the beginning of difficulties.

The prisoners could not speak Dutch, which those Indians understood nearly as well as their own dialect; and the latter could understand but little, if any, of the conversation of those Anglo-Americans. When surprised, they intimated by signs as well as they could, that they were friends of the king; and not only evinced a willingness to proceed with their captors, but a desire to do so. An axe belonging to one of them was taken along as a prize. The prisoners set off with such apparent willingness on their long journey to Canada, that the Indians did not think it necessary to bind them. They were compelled to act, however, as "hewers of wood and drawers of water," for their red masters.

They had been captives eleven days, without a favorable opportunity to mature a plan for their escape, which they had all along premeditated. On arriving at a deserted hut near Tioga Point, the captives were sent to cut wood a few rods distant. On such occasions, one cut and the other carried it where it was to be consumed. While Cowley was chopping, and Sawyer waiting for an armful, the latter took from his pocket a newspaper, and pretended to read its contents to his fellow; instead of doing which, however, he proposed a plan for regaining their

liberty. After carrying wood enough to the hut to keep fire over night, and partaking of a scanty supper, they laid down in their usual manner to rest, a prisoner between two Indians.

The friends kept awake, and after they were satisfied their foes were all sound asleep, they arose agreeable to concert, and secured their weapons, shaking the priming from the guns. Sawyer with the tomahawk of Han-Yerry—who was thought the most desperate of the four—took his station beside its owner; while Cowley with the axe, placed himself beside another sleeping Indian. The fire afforded sufficient light for the captives to make sure of their victims. At a given signal the blows fell fatal upon two; the tomahawk sank deep into the brain of its owner, giving a sound, to use the words of an informant,\* *like a blow upon a pumpkin*. Unfortunately, Sawyer drew the handle from his weapon in attempting to free it from the skull of the savage, and the remainder of the tragic act devolved upon his companion. The first one struck by Cowley was killed, but the blows which sent two to their final reckoning, awoke their fellows, who instantly sprang upon their feet. As Seth's-Henry rose from the ground, he received a blow which he partially warded off by raising his right arm; but his shoulder was laid open and he fell back stunned. The fourth, as he was about to escape, received a heavy blow in his back from the axe. He was pursued out of the hut—fled into a swamp near, where he died. The liberated prisoners returned into the hut, and were resolving on what course to pursue, when Seth's-Henry, who had recovered and feigned himself dead for some time, to embrace a favorable opportunity, sprang upon his feet—dashed through the fire—caught up his rifle, leveled and snapped it at one of his foes—ran out of the hut and disappeared.

The two friends then primed the remaining guns, and kept a vigilant watch until daylight, to guard against surprise. They set out in the morning to return, but dared not pursue the route

\* *Lawrence Mattice*. The adventures of Cowley and Sawyer were principally derived from Mr. Mattice and Henry Hager, who learned the particulars from the captives themselves.

they came, very properly supposing there were more of the enemy not far distant, to whom the surviving Indian would communicate the fate of his comrades. They recrossed a river in the morning in a bark canoe, which they had used the preceding afternoon, and then directed their course for the frontier settlements. The first night after *taking the responsibility*, Cowley was light headed for hours, and his companion was fearful his raving would betray them; but when daylight returned, reason again claimed its tenement. As they had anticipated, a party of Indians thirsting for their blood, were in hot pursuit of them. From a hill they once descried ten or a dozen in a valley below. They remained concealed beneath a shelving rock one night and two days, while the enemy were abroad, and when there, a dog belonging to the latter, came up to them. As the animal approached, they supposed their hours were numbered; but after smelling them for some time, it went away without barking. On the third night after their escape, they saw fires lit by the enemy, literally all around them. They suffered much from exposure to the weather, and still more from hunger. They expected to be pursued in the direction they had been captured, and very properly followed a zig-zag course; arriving in safety after much suffering, at a frontier settlement in Pennsylvania, where they found friends. When fairly recruited they directed their steps to Schoharie, and were there welcomed as though they had risen from the dead, among which latter number, many had supposed them.

Sawyer is said to have died many years after, in Williamstown, Mass.; and Cowley in Albany. At the time Cowley and Sawyer returned from their captivity, the upper Schoharie fort was commanded by Maj. Posey, a large, fine looking officer, *who*, as an old lady of Schoharie county once declared to the author, *was the handsomest man she ever saw*.

Friendly Indians were sometimes in the habit of taking up a winter's residence in the vicinity of American frontier posts. In the spring of this year several Indians, who pretended friendship, left the Johnstown fort, where they had for some time been a tax

on the charity of its officers; but they had gone but a few miles north of the garrison when they halted and murdered an old gentleman named Durham and his wife, whose scalps they could sell in an English market.—*James Williamson.*

The manuscript furnished the author by Judge Hager, states that in the year 1779, probably in the spring, a rumor reached the Schoharie forts that Capt. Brant, on the evening of a certain day, would arrive at some place on the Delaware river with a band of hostile followers. Col. Vrooman thereupon dispatched Capt. Jacob Hager with a company of about fifty men to that neighborhood. Hager arrived with his troops after a rapid march, at the place where it was said Brant was to pass—thirty or forty miles distant from Schoharie; and concealed them amidst some fallen timber beside the road. This station was taken in the afternoon of the day on which Brant was expected to arrive, and continued to be occupied by the Americans until the following day between ten and eleven o'clock, when, no new evidence of Brant's visit being discovered, Capt. Hager returned home—thinking it possible that Brant was pursuing a different route to the Schoharie settlements.

Capt. Hager afterwards learned from a loyalist, in whose neighborhood he had been concealed, that he had not been gone an hour when the enemy about *one hundred and fifty* strong—Indians and tories, arrived and passed the fallow where he had been secreted. On being informed that a company of Americans had so recently left the neighborhood, preparations were made to pursue them. When about to move forward, Brant enquired of a tory named Sherman, what officer commanded the Americans, and on being informed that it was Capt. Hager, whose courage from a French war acquaintance was undoubted, he consulted his chiefs and the pursuit was abandoned.

Brant, on learning that Schoharie was well defended, seems to have given up the idea of surprising that settlement, and directed his steps to more vulnerable points of attack. Several settlements were entered simultaneously by the enemy along the Mohawk river early in the season—directed no doubt by this distinguished



chief. Apprised of Sullivan's intended march to the Indian country, he hurried back to prepare for his reception.

A party of Indians under the celebrated chief *Cornplanter*, appeared in the vicinity of Fort-Plain at this time, and after burning a small church not far from the fort, among other depredations, captured John Abeel an old inhabitant. They had traveled but a few miles before they discovered that he could talk their own language nearly as well as themselves. This discovery soon led to another of a more singular character, but truly fortunate for the captive, for on enquiring his name, Cornplanter knew at once he stood before *his own father*. Abeel had been a trader among the Indians some twenty-five years before in Western New York, and in one of his visits became enamored with a pretty squaw. The graceful warrior "*John*," called among his race *Cornplanter*, now before him, was the fruit of this libidinous, wayward affection. The chief had learned the history of his parentage from his mother, who called him by the christian name of her lover. A pleasing recognition followed, the father was instantly set at liberty, and conducted in safety to his own home.—*P. J. Wagner, Esq.*

Cornplanter visited his relatives at Fort-Plain, who were among the most respectable citizens in the Mohawk valley, several times after the war; and was treated with the civilities his dignified and manly bearing merited.

The repeated assaults along the whole frontier of New York and Pennsylvania during the preceding year by the enemy, arrested the attention of Congress, which resolved to send an army into the Indian country in the summer of 1779, and retaliate their atrocities by a destruction of their settlements. Accordingly, an army was assembled under Gen. Sullivan, at Tioga Point, at which place he was met by Gen. James Clinton, who marched from Canajoharie, on the Mohawk, with a division of the army. As a preliminary movement to the invasion of the Indian country by Gen. Sullivan, Col. Van Schaick went from Fort Schuyler, under the instructions of Gen. James Clinton, with detachments of his own and Col. Gansevoort's regiment, and destroyed the possessions of the Onondagas.

While Gen. Clinton was waiting at Canajoharie for his troops and supplies to assemble, and also for the construction of bateaus, two Tories were there hung, and a deserter shot. The following letter from Gen. Clinton to his wife, dated July 6th, 1779, briefly narrates the death of the two former :

"I have nothing further to acquaint you of, except that we apprehended a certain Lieut. Henry Hare, and a Sergeant Newbury, both of Col. Butler's regiment, who confessed that they left the Seneca country with sixty-three Indians, and two white men, who divided themselves into three parties—one party was to attack Schoharie, another party Cherry-Valley and the Mohawk river, and the other party to skulk about Fort Schuyler and the upper part of the Mohawk river, to take prisoners or scalps. I had them tried by a general court martial for *spies*, who sentenced them both to be hanged, which was done accordingly at Canajoharie, to the satisfaction of all the inhabitants of that place who were friends to their country, as they were known to be very active in almost all the murders that were committed on these frontiers. They were inhabitants of Tryon county, had each a wife and several children, who came to see them and beg their lives."

The name of Hare was one of respectability in the Mohawk valley, before the revolution. Members of the Hare family were engaged for years in sundry speculations with Maj. Jelles Fonda, who, as already observed, carried on an extensive trade with the Indians and fur traders at the western military posts; his own residence being at *Caughnawaga*.\* Henry Hare resided before the war in the present town of Florida, a few miles from Fort Hunter. At the time he left the valley with the royalist party to go to Canada, his family remained, as did that of William Newbury, who

\* All the territory on the north side of the Mohawk, from *The Nose to Tribe's Hill*, a distance of nearly ten miles, was called *Caughnawaga*—an Indian name, which signified *Stone in the water*. Some writers have given as its signification, "The coffin-shaped stone in the water." Tradition has handed down from a family which early settled on the bank of the river near this stone, the interpretation first given. This Indian name, we must suppose, originated long before this state was settled by the whites: of course the aborigines could have known nothing about coffins—they had no tools by which they could possibly make them. When the revolution began, Maj. Fonda was erecting buildings for the prosecution of business, six miles westward of his *Caughnawaga* residence, on a farm since known as the Schenck place. At a later day he built the dwelling now owned by C. McVean, Esq., so pleasantly situated on the hill in Fonda, where he died June 23d, 1791, aged 64 years.

lived about 3 miles from Hare, toward the present village of Glen. If Hare had rendered himself obnoxious to the whigs of Tryon county, Newbury had doubly so, by his inhuman cruelties at the massacre of Cherry-Valley, some of which, on his trial, were proven against him. Hare and Newbury visited their friends, and were secreted for several days at their own dwellings. The former had left home before daylight to return to Canada, and was to call for his comrade on his route. Maj. Newkirk, who resided but a short distance from Hare, met a tory neighbor on the afternoon of the day on which Hare left home, who either wished to be considered one of the knowing ones, or lull the suspicions resting upon himself, who communicated to him the fact that Hare had been home—and supposing him then out of danger, he added, “perhaps he is about home yet.” He also informed him that Newbury had been seen. Hare brought home for his wife several articles of clothing, such as British calicoes, dress-shawls, Indian mocasons, &c., and on the very day he set out to return to Canada, she was so imprudent as to put them on and go visiting—the sight of which corroborated the story told Newkirk. The Major notified Capt. Snooks, who collected a few armed whigs, and in the evening secreted himself with them near the residence of Hare, if possible, to give some further account of him. Providence seems to have favored the design, for the latter, on going to Newbury’s, had sprained an ankle. Not being willing to undertake so long a journey with a lame foot, and little suspecting that a friend had revealed his visit, he concluded to return to his dwelling. While limping along through his own orchard, Francis Putman, one of Snook’s party, then but 15 of 16 years old, stepped from behind an apple tree, presented his musket to his breast, and ordered him to stand. At a given signal, the rest of the party came up, and he was secured. They learned from the prisoner that Newbury had not yet set out for Canada, and a party under Lieut. Newkirk went the same night and arrested him. They were enabled to find his house in the woods by following a tame deer which fled to it. The prisoners were next day taken to Canajoharie, where they were tried by court martial, found guilty, and execut-

ed as previously shown. The execution took place near the present village of Canajoharie.\* The influence exerted by the friends of Hare to save him would have been successful, had he declared that he visited the valley solely to see his family. He may have thought they dared not hang him ; certain it is, that when he was interrogated as to the object of his visit, he unhesitatingly said that he not only came here to see his family, but also came in the capacity of a spy. A deserter, named Titus was shot at Canajoharie about the time the spies were hung, as I have been informed by an eye witness to all three executions.—*James Williamson.*

Deserters were shot for the first, second, or third offence, as circumstances warranted. Newbury and Titus were buried near the place of execution, and the bones of one of them were thrown out at the time of constructing the Erie Canal, by workmen who were getting earth for its embankment.† The body of Hare was given to his relatives for interment. Previous to burial the coffin was placed in a cellar-kitchen, before a window, in which position a snake crawled over it. This circumstance gave rise to much speculation among the superstitious, who said "*it was the Devil after his spirit.*"

The troops under Gen. Clinton opened a road from Canajoharie through the town of Springfield, to the head of Otsego lake, where they launched their fleet of bateaus and floated down its placid waters nine miles to its outlet—now the location of the romantic and tastefully built village of Cooperstown. This passage down the lake was made on a lovely summer's day, and the surrounding hills being covered with living green, every dash of the oar throwing up the clear, sparkling water, a thousand delighted warblers greeting them from the shores as the response of the martial music from the boats—the whole being so entirely novel—the effect must have been truly enchanting and picturesque. On arriving at the foot of the lake, the troops landed and remained several weeks, until it was sufficiently raised by a dam constructed at the outlet, to float the boats. When a sufficient head of water

\**John S. Quackenboss and Mrs. E. Gardinier.*

†*Daniel Spencer, a worthy pensioner, now living at Canajoharie.*



was thus obtained—the boats having been properly arranged along the outlet and filled with the troops, stores and cannon—the dam was torn away, and the *numerous fleet of small fry*, (two hundred and eight boats) floated off in fine style, and passed down the tributary into the winding Susquehanna. (This is an aboriginal word, said to signify, *the crooked river*.) It is said that preparatory to opening the outlet of the lake, a dam made by the sagacious beavers on one of the larger inlets, which flooded considerable ground, was ordered to be destroyed to obtain the water. It was partially so served, but the night following it was, by the industrious animals, again repaired. A more effectual destruction followed, and a guard of men was stationed all night, to prevent its being again built by its lawful owners.

While the army were quartered at the outlet of Otsego lake, two men were tried for desertion, and both were sentenced to be shot. The youngest of the two, whose name was Snyder, was pardoned by Gen. Clinton. The other man was a *foreigner*, who had previously deserted from the British, and having now deserted from the American flag, and persuaded Snyder to desert, Clinton said of him—"He is good for neither king or country, let him be shot." The order was executed on the west side of the outlet, not far distant from the lake. Not a house had then been erected where Cooperstown now stands.—*Williamson*.

The company to which Williamson belonged, was attached in Sullivan's campaign to the second New York regiment, commanded by Col. Rigne, a French officer. He was a large, well made, jovial fellow, of whom Mr. Williamson related the following anecdote. Among the men who aided in our glorious struggle for independence, was a regiment of blacks, who generally proved to be good, faithful soldiers. That they might readily be distinguished, they wore wool hats with the brim and lower half of the crown colored black—the remainder being left drab or the native color. While waiting for Otsego lake to rise, the troops were drilled every day. As Col. Rigne was thus engaged with his own and parts of several other regiments, among whom were one or two companies of black soldiers, one of the latter men, from



inattention, failed to execute a command in proper time. "Hal-loo!" said the colonel, "you plack son of a b—h wid a wite face!—why you no mind you beezness?" This hasty exclamation in broken English so pleased the troops, that a general burst of laughter followed. Seeing the men mirthful at his expense, he good humoredly gave the command to order arms. "Now," said he, "*laugh your pelly full all!*" and joining in it himself, hill and dale sent back their boisterous merriment.

In the summer of 1779, Col. Wm. Butler received timely orders to move from Schoharie and join the forces under General Clinton at Canajoharie. Among Col. Butler's men, who had rendered good services in Schoharie during their sojourn, were Lieut. Thomas Boyd,\* Timothy Murphy and David Elerson. Murphy was a native of Pennsylvania, of Irish parentage, and Elerson a Virginian, of Scotch descent.

While Col. Butler was in Springfield, in the month of June, assisting to open a wagon road for the transportation of the boats, David Elerson obtained permission of his captain to proceed about

\* Lieut. Boyd was a native of Northumberland county, Pennsylvania. He was about the usual height, and was a stout built, fine looking young man; being very sociable and agreeable in his manners, which had gained him many friends in Schoharie. While there, he paid his addresses to Miss Cornelia, a daughter of Bartholomew Becker, who gave birth to a daughter after his death, of which he was the reputed father. This child, named Catharine, grew up a very respectable woman, and afterwards became the wife of Martinus Vrooman. While the troops under Col. Butler were preparing to leave Schoharie, Miss Becker, in a state of mind bordering on phrensy, approached her lover, caught hold of his arm, and in tears besought him by the most earnest entreaties, to marry her before he left Schoharie. He endeavored to put her off with future promises, and to free himself from her grasp. She told him "if he went off without marrying her, *she hoped he would be cut to pieces by the Indians!*" In the midst of this unpleasant scene, Col. Butler rode up and reprimanded Boyd for his delay, as the troops were ready to march—and the latter, mortified at being seen by his commander, thus importuned by a girl, *drew his sword and threatened to stab her if she did not instantly leave him.* She did leave him, and anticipating future shame, called down the vengeance of heaven upon him. Her imprecation was answered, as will hereafter be seen, to the fullest extent: a fearful warning to those who trifle with woman's affection. Such was the last interview of Lieut. Boyd with the girl he had engaged to marry.—*Josias E. Vrooman*, who witnessed the parting scene.

a mile from the camp to a deserted house, and gather some mustard for *greens*. While thus engaged early in the day, he heard a rustling in some rank weeds near, and on looking in that direction, discovered to his surprise, nearly a dozen Indians cautiously advancing to capture him. He sprang and seized his rifle, which stood against the house, at which instant several tomahawks were hurled at him, one of them nearly severing a finger from his left hand. He dropped his haversack of greens and fled. In starting from the house, his foes ran so as to cut off his flight to his friends. He had to pass over a small clearing between the house and the woods, and on arriving at the farther edge of the former, he found his progress obstructed by fallen trees. He plunged in among them, when his pursuers, fearing he might escape, discharged their rifles at him. The volley rattled the old timber harmlessly about his head. Driven from the direction of the American camp, he fled, not knowing whither. After running for several hours, and when he began to think he had eluded the vigilance of his pursuers, an Indian appeared before him. As he raised his rifle the savage sprang behind a tree. At that instant, a ball fired from an opposite direction entered his body just above the hip—making a bad flesh wound. He then changed his direction, and renewed his flight. Descending a steep hill into a valley, through which coursed a small stream of water, he reached the level ground much exhausted; but the moment his feet struck the cool water his strength revived, and scooping some up in his hand, which he drank, so invigorated him, that he gained the summit of the opposite hill with comparative ease. He had proceeded but a little way further, however, when he found himself again growing faint; and stepped behind a fallen tree just as an Indian appeared in pursuit. Not doubting but his hours were numbered, he resolved not to die unrevenged, and instantly raised his rifle to shoot him. Too weak and excited to hold his gun, he sat down upon the ground, rested it upon his knees, fired, and the Indian fell. He had barely time to reload his faithful piece, before several other foes came in sight. His first thought was to bring down another, but as they gathered around their fallen

chief, and began their death yell, the hope of escape again revived. While they were lingering around their comrade, Elerson darted off into the forest. He followed the windings of a creek for some distance, and finding in a thicket of hemlocks a large hollow tree, crawled into it, and heard no more of the Indians. It was near night, and being greatly exhausted, he soon fell into a sound sleep. On the following morning he backed out, found it rained, was lost, and again entered his gloomy shelter. As it continued to rain, he tarried in the log three nights and two days, without food or having his wounds dressed. He then crept from his concealment, cold, stiff and hungry, unable at first to stand upright. He was enabled, by the sun's welcome rays to direct his course, and came out at a place in Cobelskill, known in former days as Brown's Mills, distant about three miles from where he had been concealed, and at least 25 from the place where he had first been surprised. Capt. Christian Brown, the owner of the mills, was acquainted with Elerson, treated him kindly, and sent him to the Middle Fort, ten miles distant, where his wounds were properly dressed, and he recovered. The writer saw, at his interview with this old soldier in 1837, when he obtained these facts, the scars from the wounds above noticed, and also other similar *marks of honor*.

Captain Brown, (a brother of Judge Brown,) is the officer mentioned as having been engaged under Captain Patrick the summer before, in the Cobelskill battle. His mills—a grist-mill and saw-mill, were among the first erected in that part of Schoharie county, and were not burned during the war, because a tory named Sommer, who owned lands not far distant, expected if Brown's place was confiscated to the British government, to obtain it. To gratify him the buildings were spared. Brown's *house*, a small one story dwelling, now covered with moss, is still standing. At the time the lower part of Cobelskill was burnt, a party of Indians plundered it. Captain Brown, learning that the enemy were in his vicinity, hurried his family into the woods, and then returned to secure some of his effects. While thus engaged, he saw from a window a party of Indians approaching,

and as he could not leave the house so as to avoid being seen by them, he secreted himself in some part of it. The enemy entered and supposing it entirely deserted, plundered and left it, after which Capt. Brown sought his family, and with them fled to a place of greater safety.—*James Becker*. At the house of Capt. Brown, (said *George Warner*,) during the absence of the former, and in the time of the Revolution, a wedding was consummated. The groom and bride were Brown's hired man and servant girl. The Cobelskill soldiers were invited guests, and of course attended—for *who does not attend a wedding when they can?* After the lovers were united, the party as abundantly served with good *pork and sour-cROUT*; and being the best the bride could provide, they were received with as much gratification as would have been the rich dainties of a modern festival of the same character. The parties were poor, and the friends knew it, and made themselves merry. The wedding was in truth a good one, for certainly "*All's well that ends well.*"

Brown's mills were situated on a road now leading from Barnerville to the village of Cobelskill, about two miles from the latter place. They were erected on a stream of water a few rods from a deep pool, whence it issued. It was unknown for many years where the water came from, until a saw-mill was erected at Abraham Kneiskern's in Carlisle, on a stream of water, which, near the mill, sank into the earth and disappeared. After this mill began to operate, saw-dust made its appearance in the pool near Brown's mills, three miles distant. This mill-stream runs into the Cobelskill at Barnerville. Several mill-streams in Carlisle and Sharon, sink into the earth, and re-appear at considerable distances from the place of entrance.

While Gen. Sullivan, with his army, was at Tioga Point, he was much annoyed by small parties of Indians, who crept up in the long grass on the opposite side of the river, and fired upon his men, killing or wounding them in repeated instances; and he devised a plan to intercept them: the execution of which was committed to Lieut. Moses Van Campen. The following is Van



Campen's own account of his manner of proceeding, as published in a small volume entitled, *Sullivan's Campaign*.

"MAJOR ADAM HOOPS—

"An aid-de-camp to Gen. Sullivan, presented to me my instructions, with a sheet of white paper folded up, a leaden weight within, and a twine-cord about twenty feet long fastened to it. I was to get as near the enemy's camp as was prudent, and to select one of the shady oaks, conceal my men in the bush, and place my sentinel in the top of the oak, with the paper and twine-cord—to give the signal if he discovered a party of Indians—to sink the paper down the tree as many feet as they were in numbers—if passing to the right or left to give the signal accordingly.

"It was one of the warm days in the latter part of August, I marched as near to the enemy's camp as I was directed. I selected my tree—my sentinel ascended twenty or twenty-five feet, and my men were concealed. We laid in watch about an hour. Every eye was fixed on the sentinel. At length the paper dropped down about four feet. I spoke to my men, saying, 'My good fellows, we shall soon have sport.' The paper continued to drop to ten feet. I observed again, 'We shall have something more to do.' The paper continued to drop to fifteen feet. 'Now, my good fellows, we shall have enough to do—fifteen to twenty of us. Let every shot make their number less.' Behold! the fellow had fallen asleep—let the twine-cord slip through his fingers—lost his balance—and came down like a shot head foremost. He was much bruised by the fall. I make my report to the general, &c., &c.

Gen. Clinton joined Gen. Sullivan at Tioga, August 22d, and four days after, the army, then five thousand strong, moved forward. All the Indian huts discovered on the route from Tioga westward, with the fields of growing corn, beans, &c., were destroyed by the American troops. At Newtown, now Elmira, the enemy under Cols. Butler and Johnson, and the chieftain Brant, collected a force, threw up a breastwork, and prepared to dispute the further progress of the invaders of their soil. On the 29th of August the troops under Sullivan reached the fortifications of the enemy, and a spirited action followed. The enemy evinced great bravery, but being overpowered by numbers, they abandoned their works with considerable loss.

Gen. Sullivan had a morning and evening gun fired daily while proceeding to and from the Indian country, for which he has been much censured by some chroniclers. His object in doing it was,



to notify the numerous scouting parties which were daily kept out, of his position.

Several pleasing incidents owed their origin to the signal guns. In one instance a large party of Indians were in ambush to surprise an advanced guard when the signal gun was fired from elevated ground not far distant. The Indians—who ever dread the sound of cannon, supposing the gun fired at them, scampered off like frightened sheep. Upon the firing of a signal gun after the battle of Newtown, a white woman came into the American camp. Knowing Col. John Butler, whom she supposed could give her some account of her red husband, she enquired for Col. Butler, and was immediately introduced to Col. William Butler. On coming into his presence and finding him a stranger—the truth flashed upon her mind—she was in the American camp, and in the presence of those who would protect her. She stated that she was a native of Danbury, Connecticut; had been married several years, and was living at Wyoming the year before, when that delightful country was devastated by the enemy—at which time she was made a prisoner. Her husband had been killed among the numerous victims of savage cruelty. She further stated that at the time she was captured she had three children—two small boys and an infant child at the breast. The boys were given to different Indians, and the brains of the infant were dashed out against a tree; after which she was compelled to live with an Indian as his wife. When she thus providentially entered the American camp, she had an infant child—the fruit of her late unhappy connection. This child died not long after, and it was suspected that an American soldier, from sympathy to the woman, had given it poison. As the Indian country had been invaded, this woman had been obliged to follow the fortunes of her master, and having been separated from him by the discomfiture of the enemy, Sullivan's cannon, which she supposed fired in the British camp, directed her course. On the return of the army, she went back to her friends in Connecticut.—*James Williamson.*

After the battle of Newtown, Gen. Sullivan sent back to Tioga much of his heavy baggage, and pushed forward in pursuit of the

enemy—fully executing in the destruction of the settlements the orders of the Commander-in-chief. The country of the Cayugas and Senecas, where the Indians had many flourishing settlements and several well built villages of good painted frame-houses, were entirely destroyed—together with the fields of growing corn and beans. Fruit trees, of which the Indians had an abundance, laden with green apples, peaches, and pears, were cut down. Ears of corn were found in that country full *eighteen inches long*, showing the exceeding fertility of the soil. It seems indeed lamentable that stern necessity should require the destruction of *fruit trees*, the growth of many years—but when we consider that they afforded the enemy an important item of his annual food, we must admit that the measure as one of *retaliation*, was justifiable.

At the Indian village of *Kanadaseago*, situated a little distance west of Geneva, a white male child was found by the American army. It was not more than three or four years old, and when discovered, was naked, with a string of beads about its neck. This child, which had been abandoned by the enemy in their precipitate flight, was supposed to have been among the captives made the year before, on the frontiers of New York or Pennsylvania. He was found before the door of a hut playing with small sticks, and when accosted could only say, *sago—how do*, and a few other Indian words; having been captured too young to give the least clue to his paternity.—*James Williamson*.

In addition to the above, I learn from the son of Capt. Machin, respecting this probable orphan child, that it found in that officer, (an *engineer* in the army,) a god-father, and was christened *Thomas Machin*—that it was nearly famished when found, and could not have been kept alive, had not the Americans providentially taken a fresh-milk cow which had strayed from the enemy—that the milk of this cow, which was driven with the army on the return march for that purpose, afforded its nourishment—that the *little unknown* was taken in the fall to the house of Maj. Logan at New Windsor, where it took the small-pox in the hard winter following and died, without any information ever being disclosed as to its birth-place or parentage.

Major Paar commanded the rifle corps which accompanied Sullivan in his expedition. When the army, which had met with little opposition from the enemy after the battle of Newtown, arrived at the inlet of Conesus Lake, a scout was sent out early in the evening, under Lieut. Thomas Boyd,\* one of which was Timothy Murphy. Says Major Hoops, in a letter I find in *Sullivan's Campaign*—

“I was in the General's tent when he gave his instructions to Lieut. Boyd, which were very particular—verbal, of course. The country before us was unknown. We had heard of an Indian *Castle* on the river Genesee, which, by our reckoning, might be a few miles ahead of us. The term *Castle* was taken from *Chateau*—the French having long before magnified Indian villages into *Chateaux*, afterwards rendered literally into English. There were the Oneida *Castle*, perhaps at or near to Utica,—the Seneca *Castle*, near to the present village of Geneva, as well as some others. The *Castle* Lieut. Boyd was detached to discover, consisted, probably, of a few Indian huts, near Williamsburgh, a few miles above the present village of Genesee.

“The evening before Lieut. Boyd was detached by Gen. Sullivan from the inlet of the Kanaghsas Lake, a log bridge was begun and finished in the night, or early in the next morning, over the inlet. Boyd, not having returned by daylight, the General was very uneasy; particularly from finding that, to the *six riflemen* he meant Boyd's party should consist of, *twenty-two musketmen* had been added.”

The bridge alluded to was constructed by a strong covering party, sent in advance of the main army to open a road through a marshy piece of ground, and erect the bridge. The object of the scout was, to reconnoitre the ground near the Genesee river, at a place now called Williamsburgh, at a distance from the camp of nearly *seven miles*. The party were guided by Han Yerry—John George—a faithful Oneida warrior.

In a skirmish which took place the afternoon previous to the surprise and massacre of Boyd's command, between Sullivan's advance guard and the enemy, the latter captured two friendly Oneidas, who had, from the beginning of the war, rendered the Americans constant service, and one of whom was then acting as

\*Some published account has erroneously stated the given name of this man to have been William.

Gen. Sullivan's principal guide. This Indian had an older brother engaged with the enemy, who, as they met, is said (in *Stone's Brant*) to have addressed him as follows :

"Brother ! You have merited death. The hatchet or the war-club shall finish your career. When I begged of you to follow me in the fortunes of war, you were deaf to my entreaties.

"Brother ! You have merited death, and shall have your deserts. When the rebels raised their hatchets to fight against their good master, you sharpened your knife, you brightened your rifle, and led on our foes to the fields of our fathers.

"Brother ! You have merited death, and shall die by our hands. When those rebels had driven us from the fields of our fathers to seek out new houses, it was you who could dare to step forth as their pilot, and conduct them even to the doors of our wigwams, to butcher our children and put us to death. No crime can be greater. But though you have merited death, and shall die on this spot, *my* hands shall not be stained with the blood of a brother. *Who will strike?*"

In an instant the tomahawk of *Little Beard* was twirled with lightning rapidity over his head, and in another the brave Oneida, the friend of America and of humanity, lay dead at the feet of the infuriated chief.

When we contrast the conduct of this Indian, who declared that his hands should not be stained with the blood of a brother ; with that of the fratricide, who sought out his brother among the fleeing inhabitants of Wyoming, and shot him while in the act of begging for his life ; with that of William Newbury, at the massacre of Cherry-Valley, who, finding a little girl by the name of Mitchell among the fallen, in whom the spark of life was reviving, with the blow of his hatchet, in the presence of her concealed father, laid her dead at his feet ; with that of a tory named Beacraft, who was with the desolators of Vrooman's Land ; and other instances of no less savage spirit—we shall find that of the unlettered Indian to rise in the scale of our just estimation, as that of his more savage allies, sinks them to abhorrence and contempt.

One mile and a half from Sullivan's camp, the Indian path divided, one branch leading to Canasaraga, in the direction of Williamsburg, and the other to Beard's Town. Boyd advanced cautiously and took the Canasaraga path. On arriving at the latter



place, he found it deserted, although the fires of the enemy were still burning. As the night was far advanced, he encamped near the village, intending to seek out on the morrow, the location of the enemy. This was a most hazardous enterprise. Twenty-eight men, *seven miles* from their camp—a dense forest intervening—and a thousand foes besetting their path to cut off their retreat. But *danger* was what the party courted. Before day break, Boyd dispatched two of his men to Sullivan's camp—intending to push forward still farther into the wilderness—but as they never reached it, it is quite probable they were intercepted by the enemy and slain.—*S. Treat's Oration, in Sullivan's Campaign.* Before they were put to death, the enemy no doubt learned from them the exact situation of Boyd's command. Just after daylight, Lieut. B., accompanied by Murphy cautiously crept from his place of concealment. Near the village of Canasaraga, they discovered two Indians coming out of a hut, fired at them, and a ball from Murphy's rifle sealed the fate of one. The other instantly fled. Murphy, as was his usual custom when he killed an Indian, took off his scalp, and as he had on a good pair of moccasins, he transferred them to his own feet. After the escape of the Indian fired upon by Boyd, he rightly supposed his visit would soon be made known, and he resolved to return immediately to the American camp. Boyd was advised by Han-Yerry to pursue a different route back, which commendable advice he did not choose to follow.—*James Williamson.*

About the time Murphy shot the Indian in the morning, an incident of interest occurred near the main army, which is thus related by *Maj. Hoops.*

“Early in the morning, Mr. Lodge, the surveyor, proceeded to chain from the west side of the inlet, where there was a picquet posted, and ascended a little way from the foot of the hill, *outside* the sentinels, in advance from the picquet, and was noting his work, when he was fired on by a single Indian who had crept up near him. Leaving his Jacob-staff standing, he made the best of his way toward a sentinel—the Indian almost at his heels, tomahawk in hand. It is probable the Indian had not seen the sentinel till he raised his piece and (when Mr. Lodge had passed him) fired, bringing him down, perhaps not mortally wounded. The



whole picquet immediately advanced, strongly supported ; and ascending the hill, found a line of packs."

Lieut. Boyd and his followers pursued their back track with the most zealous caution, with Han-Yerry in front and Murphy in the rear, to guard against surprise. It is not improbable that the two messengers sent forward by Boyd a few hours before, had fallen into the hands of the enemy contiguous to the American camp, and that they had left their packs to intercept the returning scout, which were found soon after Mr. Lodge was fired upon. Not the rustling of a leaf or spear of grass escaped the observation of the returning scout. Nearly two-thirds of the distance was overcome—less than two miles intervened between them and the camp—and the party were beginning to breathe freely, when they were surprised by 500 Indians under Brant, and 500 Royalists under Butler. The enemy were secreted in a ravine through which they rightly conjectured Boyd would approach.—*Statement of John Salmon, in Sullivan's Campaign.* What could 28 men do, when opposed by 1000, or nearly *forty to one*. Discovering the enemy to be concealed in great numbers, Boyd resolved on attempting his escape by cutting through his thickly opposing ranks. In the first onset, not one of his men fell, although their fire told fearfully upon the enemy. A second and third attempt was made, and *seventeen* of the Americans had fallen.—*Salmon.* At the third onset of the brave scout, the ranks of the enemy were broken, and Murphy, tumbling a huge warrior in the dust who obstructed his passage—even to the merriment of his dusky companions—led his thus liberated comrades.—*Treat's Oration.* Boyd, supposing if any one escaped with life it would be Murphy, determined to follow him, but not being as fast a runner, he was soon taken, and with him one of his men named Parker. Murphy, as he found the path unobstructed, exclaimed of himself, in hearing of the enemy, "*Clean Tim. by G—d!*" shaking his fist at the same time at his pursuers.—*Treat's Oration.* After Murphy had been pursued for some time, he observed that he had distanced all his blood-thirsty followers except two, a tall and a short Indian. Several times as they neared him, Murphy would

raise his rifle, which was unloaded, and they would fall back. He found as he ran, that his mocasons began to prove too tight, owing to the swelling of his feet.\* He opened a pocket knife, and while running (at the hazard of cutting his shins) he slit the tops of his mocasons, which afforded relief. Shortly after, he entered a piece of swale, and his feet becoming entangled in long grass and rank weeds, he fell. The place proved a favorable one for concealment, and he did not immediately rise. As his pursuers broke over a knoll so as to gain a view of the grass plot, not discovering him, although he did them, they altered their course. Murphy then loaded his rifle, and cautiously proceeded on his way to the camp. He knew from the beginning of the *melee*, should he be taken prisoner, what his fate would be, having the scalp of an Indian in his pocket, and his mocasons on his feet. Shortly after Murphy again set forward, he discovered himself to be headed by an Indian in the woods: which discovery was mutual and both took trees. After dogging each other for some time, Murphy drew his ramrod, placed his hat upon it and gently moved it aside the tree; when the Indian, supposing it contained a head, fired a ball through it. The hat was thereupon dropped, and running up to scalp his man, the Indian received the bullet of Murphy's rifle through his breast; exclaiming, as he fell backwards, "*O-wah!*"

Murphy, Garret Putman of Fort Hunter (afterwards a captain,) and a French Canadian, were all of Lieut. Boyd's command who regained the American camp. The two latter secreted themselves early in their flight under a fallen tree, around which was growing a quantity of thrifty nettles, and escaped observation; although several Indians passed over the log in pursuit of Murphy. John Putman, a cousin of Garret, also from the vicinity of Fort Hunter, was killed in Groveland. At his burial it was supposed he had been shot in the act of firing, as a ball and

\* It has been stated, and is now believed by many, that Murphy skinned the feet of this Indian and put the green hides on. It was not so; and had he been disposed to have done it, which I cannot possibly admit, he could not have had time on that morning.

several buck-shot had entered the right arm-pit, without injuring the arm.—*Peter, a brother of John Putman, corroborated by James Williamson.*

A soldier named Benjamin Custom, who joined Gen. Sullivan with the troops from Schoharie, attempted to follow Murphy, but was overtaken and slain in Groveland.—*Geo. Richtmyer.* When Murphy reached the camp, and told the sad fate of his companions, Gen. Sullivan declared *it was good enough for them, as they had disobeyed his orders* ; possibly in advancing farther than he intended they should.—*J. Williamson.*

When Boyd found himself a prisoner, he obtained an interview with Brant, who was a freemason. After the magic signs of a brotherhood were exchanged, the dusky warrior assured the captain he should not be injured. Soon after their capture, Boyd and Parker were hurried off to the vicinity of *Beard's Town*, now in the town of Leicester, ten or fifteen miles distant from the battle-field. Brant was called off on some enterprise not long after, and the prisoners were kept in charge of one of the Butlers, probably Walter, the destroyer of Cherry-Valley; who began to interrogate them about the future instructions of Gen. Sullivan, threatening them, if true and ready answers were not given, with savage tortures. Boyd, believing the assurance of Brant ample for his safety, too high minded to betray his country on the appearance of danger, refused, as did Parker, to answer Butler's questions; and the latter, executing his threat, gave them over to a party of Seneca Indians. Little Beard and his warriors, seized the helpless victims, and having stripped, bound them to trees. They then practised their favorite pastime for such occasions, of throwing their hatchets into the tree just over the heads of their victims. Becoming wearied of this amusement, a single blow severed Parker's head from his body. The attention of the tormentors being undivided, they began to tax their ingenuity for tortures to inflict on his surviving comrade. Making an incision into the abdomen, they fastened his intestines to a tree, and compelled him to move round it, until they were thus all drawn out. He was again pinioned to a tree, his mouth enlarged—his

nails dug out—his tongue cut out—his ears cut off—his nose cut off and thrust into his mouth—his eyes dug out, and when sinking in death, he was also decapitated, and his disfigured head raised upon a sharpened pole. To those Indian cruelties we must suppose Butler was not only a witness, but that they were rendered the more inhuman, in the hope of gratifying his revengeful disposition. Thus fell the brave Lieutenant Thomas Boyd, at the age of twenty-two years.

On the arrival of Murphy, Gen. Sullivan ordered Gen. Hand forward to relieve Boyd and party. At the spot where the engagement had taken place, he discovered several Indian blankets, and an Indian's corpse, which had been accidentally left among the fallen Americans; but returned to the main army, ignorant of the fate of Boyd.—*Oration of Treat.*

Poor Han-Yerry, who had performed prodigies of valor in the conflict of Oriskany, and who had rendered the American cause much real service, fell literally hacked in pieces. The army, as it moved on towards the Genesee river, buried the bodies of those who fell in the present town of Groveland. On the following day, Generals Clinton and Hand, with about two thousand troops, were sent across the Genesee river to Beard's Town, to destroy the dwellings, crops, &c. of the Senecas.—*Treat's Oration and Letter of Van Campen.*

Mr. Sanborn, a soldier who was on the extreme right wing of Clinton's army, discovered the headless bodies of Boyd and Parker. The rifle company of Captain Simpson, of which Boyd had been lieutenant, performed the melancholy duty of burying the mutilated remains of their comrades, which was done *under a wild plum tree, and near a stream of water.*—*James Williamson.*

Beard's Town, one of the largest Indian villages in the Genesee valley, was effectually destroyed, as were several other Indian towns on the west side of the Genesee, by the troops under Gen. Clinton, together with every growing substance found, that the enemy would eat. While this destruction was in progress, officers Poor and Maxwell proceeded along the east side of the river and destroyed the villages of *Canawagus* and *Big Tree*. Three

days being thus occupied in this vicinity, in the work of devastation, Sullivan commenced his return march to Tioga Point. As the American troops approached the western Indian villages, the women and children fled from them to Niagara, while the Indians and their tory allies prowled about the forest, watching the movements of their foes, and seeking a favorable opportunity to strike an effective blow. During the winter following, the Indians became a tax upon the British government, and as the weather was intensely cold, and they were fed on salt provisions, to which they were unaccustomed, they died in fearful numbers by the scurvy.—*Treat's Oration.*

It is gratifying to know, that justice has now been done to the memory of Boyd and his companions. In the autumn of 1841, *sixty-two years* after their massacre, their remains were taken up, through the commendable zeal of the citizens of Rochester, removed to that city and deposited at Mount-Hope cemetery. On the delivery, by the citizens of Livingston county, of the bones of Boyd and Parker, which were found near the junction of two creeks, hereafter to be known as *Boyd's creek* and *Parker's creek*, and those of that unfortunate lieutenant's command who fell in Groveland, to the receiving committee of Monroe county, an appropriate oration was delivered at Geneseo, by S. Treat, Esq. of that place, to an audience, estimated at *five thousand persons*. When the procession arrived at Mount-Hope, near Rochester, and had deposited the sarcophagus and urn in their final resting place, a patriotic address was delivered by his Excellency William H. Seward. Several old soldiers took part in the ceremonies, among whom were Maj. Moses Van Campen, who had, in early life, been a near neighbor of Boyd, and Mr. Sanborn, who discovered the remains of Boyd and Parker the day after they were killed. The proceedings were highly creditable to the enterprise and patriotism of Monroe and Livingston counties, and will forever be hailed as a bright page in the history of Western New York. The place of their burial at Mount-Hope, is set apart not only to receive the remains of those brave men, but of any other soldiers of the revolution that may desire a burial there.



To a State Convention, called to devise measures "*for appreciating the currency, restraining extortion, regulating prices, and other similar purposes,*" Frederick Fisher, John Frey, Christopher W. Fox, Crowneage Kincade, John Petrie, and Werner Deygert were elected by the people of the Mohawk valley, as certified to by Jacob G. Klock, chairman of Tryon county committee. Dated, Committee Chamber, August 16, 1779.

In October of this year, the enemy, about two hundred strong, under Major Monroe, consisting of British regulars, tories, and Indians, entered the Ballston settlement. Most of the early settlers of Saratoga county were from New England, and were good li-vers. An invasion had been anticipated, and two hundred Schenectada militia were sent to aid in protecting the settlement. A church, called afterwards the *red meeting-house*, was being erected at the time, and opposite and near it, a dwelling owned by a Mr. Weed was inclosed in pickets, at which place the Schenectada troops were stationed. About the same time, the Ballston militia, thinking the troops sent to aid them were not sufficiently courageous, erected a small defence on Pearson's Hill, afterwards called Court House Hill, nearly two miles in advance of the stockade named, and where the invaders were expected to enter. The little fortress on the hill was guarded for several nights, but as the enemy did not appear, it was abandoned.

The second night (Sunday night) after the Ballston troops dispersed, the enemy broke into the settlement. They made their first appearance at Gordon's Mills, situated on a stream called the Morning kill, entering the public road at the foot of the hill noticed. Col. James Gordon, who commanded the Ballston militia, and Capt. Collins, an active partizan officer, living near him, were both surprised at their dwellings, and borne into captivity, with nearly thirty of their neighbors. On the arrival of the enemy at the house of Capt. Collins, Mann Collins, his son, escaped from it, and gave the alarm to John and Stephen Ball, his brothers-in-law. The latter mounted a horse, and rode to the house of Maj. Andrew Mitchell, (Major under Col. Gordon,) who, with his family, fled into the fields, and escaped. The Balls also communi-

cated intelligence of the enemy's proximity to the Schenectada troops at the Fort.

At Gordon's Mills, one Stowe, his miller, was captured on the arrival of Monroe's party, and, for some reason, soon after liberated. Feeling himself obligated to Col. Gordon, he thought it his duty to inform him of his danger, and afford him a chance of escape. Crossing a field with that laudable intent, he met an Indian, who, seeing a fugitive, as he supposed, attempting to escape, thrust a spontoon through his body, and instantly killed him.

Great numbers of cattle and hogs were driven away at this time, or killed, several dwellings and out-buildings burned, and the whole settlement greatly alarmed by the invaders, who proceeded directly back to Canada by the eastern route. Among the dwellings burned were those of one Waters, one Pearson, several Spragues, and several Patchins. Two dwellings, a little north of the present residence of Judge Thompson, owned at the time by Kennedys, escaped the torch, as they had a friend among the invaders.

The troops assembled in the neighborhood were on their trail by daylight on Monday morning, and followed some distance; but meeting a liberated captive, who bore a message from Col. Gordon advising the Americans to abandon the pursuit, it was given over. Why the message was sent, I am not informed, but presume he either thought the enemy too strong to warrant it, or the prisoners in danger of assassination if a hasty retreat was necessary. Col. Gordon was an Irishman by birth, and a firm patriot. He was confined in a Canadian prison for several years, and was one of a party of six or eight prisoners, who effected their escape in the latter part of the war, and after much suffering succeeded in reaching home. Henry and Christian Banta, Epenetus White, an ensign of militia, and several others, neighbors of Col. G., and captured subsequently, also escaped with him. Procuring a boat, the fugitives crossed the St. Lawrence, and from its southern shore directed their steps through the forest, coming out at Passamaquoddy Bay, in Maine, where they found friends. Before reaching a dwelling the party were all in a starving condition, and Col.

Gordon gave out, and was left, at his request, by his friends, who proceeded to a settlement, obtained assistance, returned, and bore him in a state of entire helplessness to a place of safety, where he recovered.

While the party were journeying, they agreed that if either of them obtained any thing to eat, he should be permitted to enjoy or distribute it as he chose. In the forest, to which the trapper had not been a stranger, one of the number found a steel-trap, in which an otter had been caught, and suffered to remain. It was mostly in a state of decomposition. The leg in the trap was whole, however, and a sight of that, Col. Gordon afterwards assured his friends, looked more inviting to him than the most savory dish he had ever beheld; but pinching hunger did not compel a violation of their agreement—his mouth watered in vain, and the finder ate his dainty morsel undisturbed. When the fugitives arrived at a house, and asked for bread, the woman told them *she had not seen a morsel in three years*. After crossing the St. Lawrence, two Indians accompanied them as guides, but under some pretext left, and finally abandoned them. The party, after suffering almost incredible hardships, all reached their homes in Ballston to the great joy of their friends.—*Charles and Hugh, sons of Major Mitchell*.

In the fall of 1779, several stockades in the vicinity of the Mohawk river were under the command of Col. Fr. Fisher, as appears by a journal of that officer's military correspondence, placed in the hands of the author by his son Maj. Daniel Visscher. Col. Fisher established his head quarters at Fort Paris. The following facts are gleaned from the memoranda. His first *patrol* for the several garrisons was "Washington," and *countersign* "Sullivan." Subject to his direction were the troops stationed at the Johnstown Fort, Fort Plank, and the block-houses at Sacandaga, and Reme Snyder's bush. The last named was a little distance northeast of Little Falls.

About the 10th of November, as reported to Gen. Ten Broek, then commanding at Albany, Col. Fisher mentions the burning of a dwelling in the back part of Mayfield. The owner, Harmanus Flanke, suspected of disaffection to the American cause, was then

living in Johnstown. The house was supposed to have been destroyed by some one from the block-house at Sacandaga. The roof of another house, the owner of which was of similar politics, was torn off, such was the spirit of party animosity.

In a letter to Maj. Taylor, then commanding the Johnstown Fort, dated November 27, Col. Fisher states that he is under the necessity of convening a court martial on the following day, and that he, the Major, should attend, bringing with him another officer, also to act as a member. The same letter states that an accident happened at that fort the same morning, by which two men were wounded—one mortally. The nature of the accident is perhaps explained in a letter from Col. Fisher to Gen. Ten Broek, dated the 28th instant. In it he states, that during his absence to visit Fort Plank, a detachment of men from Col. Stephen J. Schuyler's regiment *mutinied*, and expressing a determination to leave the fort, charged their pieces with ball, in presence of the officers. They were at first persuaded to unsling their packs and remain until Col. Fisher returned, but seeing Captain Jelles Fonda, (known afterwards as Major Fonda,) then in temporary command of the garrison, writing to Col. F., the mutineers again mounted packs, and knocking down the sentinels in their way, began to desert in earnest. Capt. Fonda ordered them to stand, but not heeding his command they continued their flight, when he ordered the troops of the Fort to fire upon them: the order was obeyed, and Jacob Valentine, one of the number, fell mortally wounded, and expired the next morning. The letter does not so state, but I have been advised that the deserters considered their term of enlistment at an end. The court martial, I suppose, convened to try Capt. Fonda, as I have been credibly informed that he was thus tried for a similar offence, and *honorably acquitted*.

Early in December, as the season was so far advanced that an enemy was unlooked for, and provisions were becoming scarce, it was resolved, at a meeting of Colonels Fisher, J. Klock, and Lt. Col. B. Wagner, with the sanction of Gen. Ten Broek, to dismiss the three months militia from further service; and some of the garrisons were for a time broken up.

The early and energetic measures adopted in 1779, against the enemy, prevented the sallies of the latter upon most of the frontiers of New York, and that year was one in which the pioneers suffered comparatively but little, from the tomahawk and scalping knife.

At this period of the contest the states were beginning to gain favor in Europe. Early in 1779, the king of Naples opened his ports to the striped bunting of the United States; and in the course of the season Spain declared war against England. John Jay was appointed by Congress, of which he was then a member, a minister to the court of Spain.

Although no great enterprises were achieved to the United States during this season, if we except the destruction of the Indian possessions in western New York; still many events occurred in the length and breadth of the land, to raise and depress the hopes of the Americans. The south became the theatre of some of the most important events. An attempt was made by the American troops under Gen. Lincoln, and the French under the Count d'Estaing, to take Savannah; and notwithstanding the allied forces displayed great bravery, they were repulsed with a loss of 1000 men. Several good officers were killed in this unfortunate attack, among whom was the noble and generous Pole, Count Pulaski, then a brigadier-general.

Although several brilliant exploits were performed at the south by the American troops, still the year closed without any event transpiring to greatly accelerate the close of the contest. In the course of the season, Gen. Tryon and Gen. Garth wantonly destroyed much property along the coast of Connecticut. After sacking New Haven, they laid Fairfield and Norwalk in ashes, committing numerous outrages upon the helpless citizens. As the militia turned out promptly on those occasions, the British sought safety on shipboard. While the enemy were thus engaged in Connecticut, Gen. Wayne most gallantly stormed the fortress of Stony Point in the Highlands of the Hudson.

It was also in the autumn of this season that Com. John Paul Jones, a meritorious and distinguished naval officer in the Ameri-



can service, alarmed several towns in Scotland, and in an engagement off that coast, took the British frigate *Serapis*, after one of the most bloody battles ever fought upon the ocean. Both ships were repeatedly on fire, and when the enemy struck his colors, the wounded could scarcely be removed to the conquered vessel, which was also much crippled, before the *Bon Homme Richard*, Jones's ship, went down.

At the close of the season, part of the northern army went into winter quarters under Gen. Washington a second time at Morristown, New Jersey, and the remainder in the vicinity of West Point. Owing to the almost valueless currency of the country, which would not buy provisions, a want of proper management in the commissary department, a lack of suitable clothing, and the extreme severity of the winter, the American troops suffered incredible hardships. But this suffering was endured, for their beloved commander suffered with them, and the object for which the soldier had taken up arms, had not yet been accomplished.

## CHAPTER XI.

If the Indians had been severely chastised in New York in 1779, and had been obliged to seek out new habitations for their families, and consequently were not very troublesome that season; they were early treading the war path the succeeding year, to revenge the lasting injuries done them.

The following incident transpired in the spring of 1780, in the Mohawk valley. The facts were related to the author by *John S. Quackenboss, and Isaac Covenhoven, the latter one of the actors:*

George Cuck, a tory who had become somewhat notorious from his having been engaged with the enemy at Oriskany, Cherry-Valley, and elsewhere, entered the valley of the Mohawk late in the fall of 1779, with the view of obtaining the scalps of Capt. Jacob Gardiner, and his Lieut. Abraham D. Quackenboss, (father of John S.,) for which the enemy had offered a large bounty. Cuck was seen several times in the fall, and on one occasion, while sitting upon a rail fence, was fired upon by Abraham Covenhoven, a former whig neighbor. The ball entered the rail upon which he sat, and he escaped. As nothing more was seen of him after that event, it was generally supposed he had returned to Canada. At this period, a tory by the name of John Van Zuyler, resided in a small dwelling which stood in a then retired spot, a few rods south of the present residence of Maj. James Winne, in the town of Glen. Van Zuyler had three daughters, and although he lived some distance from neighbors, and a dense forest intervened between his residence and the river settlements, several miles distant, the young whigs would occasionally visit his girls. Tory girls, I must presume, sometimes made agreeable *sparks*, or *sparkers*, especially in *sugar time*.

James Cromwell, a young man who lived near the Mohawk, went out one pleasant summer evening in the month of March, to see one of Van Zuyler's daughters. Most of the settlers then made maple sugar, and Cromwell found his fair Dulcinea, boiling sap in the *sugar bush*. While they were *sparkling it*, the term for courting in the country, the girl, perhaps thinking her name would soon be Mrs. Cromwell, became very confiding and communicative. She told her beau that the tory Cuck, was at their house. Cromwell at first appeared incredulous—"he is surely there," said she, "and when any one visits the house, *he is secreted under the floor*." The report of his having been seen in the fall instantly recurred to his mind, and from the earnestness of the girl, he believed her story. Perhaps Cromwell was aware that the girl when with *him* was inclined to be *whiggish*—be that as it may, he resolved instantly to set about ascertaining the truth or falsehood of the information. In a very short time he complained of being made suddenly ill, from eating too much sugar. The girl whose sympathy was aroused, thinking from his motions that he was badly gripped, finally consented to let him go home and *sugar off* alone. Away went Cromwell pressing his hands upon his bowels, and groaning fearfully until he was out of sight and hearing of his paramour, when the pains left him. Taking a direct course through the woods, he reached the dwelling of Capt. Jacob Gardinier, some four miles below his own, and within the present village of Fultonville, about 12 o'clock at night, and calling him up, told him what he had heard. Capt. Gardinier sent immediately to his Lieut. Quackenboss, to select a dozen stout hearted men and meet them as soon as possible at his house. The lieutenant enquired what business was on hand—the messenger replied—"Capt. Gardinier said I should tell you that *there was a black bear to be caught*." In a short time the requisite number of whigs had assembled, and the captain, taking his lieutenant aside, told him the duty he had to perform. He declined going himself on account of ill health, and entrusted the enterprise to his lieutenant. He directed him to proceed with the utmost caution, as the foe was no doubt armed, and as his

name was a terror in the valley, to kill him at all hazards. The party well armed, set off on the mission.

The snow yet on the ground was crusted so hard, that it bore them, and having the advantage of a bright moon-light night, they marched rapidly forward. Halting a quarter of a mile from Van Zuyler's house, the lieutenant struck up a fire, and as his men gathered round an ignited stump, he addressed them nearly as follows: "My brave lads! It is said the villian Cuck, is in yonder house, secreted beneath the floor. The object of our visit is to destroy him. He is a bold and desperate fellow—doubtless well armed, and in all probability some of us must fall by his hand. Those of you, therefore, who decline engaging in so dangerous an undertaking, are now at liberty to return home." "We are ready to follow where you dare to lead!" was the response of one and all. It is yet too early, said the lieutenant, and while they were waiting for the return of day, the plan of attack was agreed upon. At the stump was assembled Lieut. Quackenboss, Isaac and Abraham Covenhoven, twin brothers, John Ogden, Jacob Collier, Abraham J., and Peter J. Quackenboss, Martin Gardinier, James Cromwell, Gilbert Van Alstyne, Nicholas, son of Capt. Gardinier, a sergeant, Henry Thompson, and Nicholas Quackenboss, also a sergeant. It was agreed that the party should separate and approach the house in different directions, so as not to excite suspicion. The appearance of a light in the dwelling was the signal for moving forward, and selecting Ogden, Collier, and Abraham J. Quackenboss to follow him, the lieutenant led directly to the house. As they approached it, a large watch dog met them with his yelping, which caused the opening of a little wooden slide over a loophole for observation, by a member of the family; but seeing only four persons, the inmates supposed they were sugar-makers. On reaching the door and finding it fastened, the soldiers instantly forced it—the family, as may be supposed, were thrown into confusion by the unexpected entrance of armed men. "What do you want here?" demanded Van Zuyler. "The tory George Cuck!" was the lieutenant's reply. Van Zuyler declared that the object of

their search was not in his house. The three daughters had already gone to the sugar-works, and their father expressed to Lieut. Quackenboss, his wish to go there too. He was permitted to go, but thinking it possible that Cuck might also have gone there, several men then approaching the house, were ordered to keep an eye on his movement. Abraham Covenhoven was one of the second party who entered the house. There was a dark stairway which led to an upper room, in which it was thought the object of their search might be secreted. Covenhoven was in the act of ascending the stairs with his gun aimed upward, and ready to fire, as Abraham J. Quackenboss, drew a large chest from the wall on one side of the room, disclosing the object of their search. Discharging a pistol at Nicholas Gardinier, the tory sprang out before Quackenboss, who was so surprised that he stood like a statue, exclaiming, "*dunder! dunder! dunder!*" The wary lieutenant was on his guard, and as Cuck leaped upon the floor from a little cellar hole, made on purpose for his secretion, he sent a bullet through his head, carrying with it the eye opposite. He fell upon one knee, when the lieutenant ordered the two comrades beside him to fire. Ogden did so, sending a bullet through his breast, and as he sank to the floor, Collier, placing the muzzle of his gun near his head, blew out his brains. Thus ended the life of a man, who, in an evil hour, had resolved to imbrue his hands in the blood of his former neighbors and countrymen.

When the first gun was fired, Covenhoven said the report was so loud and unexpected that he supposed it fired by Cuck himself, and came near falling down stairs. Had the party not divided into several squads, the peep from the slide window would have betrayed the object of their visit, and more than one would doubtless have fallen before the villain had been slain, for he had two loaded guns in the house, and a brace of well charged pistols, only one of which he had taken into his kennel. They also found belonging to him, a complete Indian's dress, and two small bags of parched corn and maple sugar, pounded fine and mixed together, an Indian dish, called by the Dutch *quitcheraw*—intended as food for a long journey.



After his death, it was ascertained that Cuck had entered the valley late in the fall—that he had been concealed at the house of this kindred spirit, who pretended neutrality in the contest, whose retired situation favored the plans of his guest, and was watching a favorable opportunity to secure the scalps mentioned, and return to Canada. The making of maple sugar he had supposed would favor his intentions, as an enemy was unlooked for so early in the season, and the persons whose scalps he sought, would probably expose themselves in the woods. He had intended, if possible, to secure both scalps in one day, and by a hasty flight, pursue the nearest route to Canada. As the time of sugar-making had arrived, it is probable his enterprise was on the eve of being consummated; but the goddess of liberty, spread her wings in his path, and defeated his hellish intentions.

Van Zuyler was made a prisoner by the party, and lodged in the jail at Johnstown; from whence he was removed not long after to Albany. When they were returning home with Van Zuyler in custody, as they approached the *sugar bush* of Evert Van Epps, near the present village of Fultonville, one of them, putting on the Indian dress of Cuck, (which, with the guns and pistols were taken home as trophies,) approached the sugar makers as an enemy, which occasioned a precipitate retreat. The fugitives were called back by others of the party, when a rope being provided, their prisoner was drawn up to the limb of a tree several times by the neck; but as he had been guilty of no known crime, except that of harboring Cuck, although suspected of burning Covenhoven's barn in the fall, his life was spared and he was disposed of as before stated. Cuck was a native of Tryon county, and was born not many miles from where he died.

On the 2d day of April, 1780, a scout of fourteen individuals, commanded by Lieut. Alexander Harper, (not Col. John Harper as stated by some writers,) were sent from the Schoharie forts by Col. Vrooman into the vicinity of Harpersfield, to keep an eye on the conduct of certain suspected persons living near the head waters of the Delaware, and if possible to make a quantity of maple sugar. The party were surprised after being there a few days,

by a body of Indians and tories under Joseph Brant, and hurried off to Canada. The scout consisted of Lt. Harper, Freegift Patchin,\* Isaac Patchin his brother, Ezra Thorp, Lt. Henry Thorp, Thomas Henry, afterwards major, and his brother James Henry, Cornelius Teabout, one Stevens and five others. About the time they arrived at their place of destination, a heavy snow fell, and not anticipating the approach of a foe, they began their sugar manufacture. The preceding winter has justly been designated in the annals of *mercury* as the *cold winter*, and the spring was very backward. They were busily engaged in sugar making—which can only be done while the weather thaws in the day time and freezes in the night—from the time of their arrival until the 7th, when they were surprised by *forty-three* Indians and *seven* tories.

So unlooked for was the approach of an enemy, and so complete was their surprise, that the Americans did not fire a gun. Two of them were shot down, and eleven more, who were in the *sugar bush*, surrendered themselves prisoners. Poor Stevens, who was on that day sick in bed, and unable to proceed with the prisoners, was killed and scalped in cold blood. Brant, on recognising Harper, approached him. "*Harper!*" said he, "*I am sorry to find you here!*" "*Why?*"—asked the latter. "*Because*" replied he, "*I must kill you, although we were once school mates!*" The ostensible object of Brant's mission had been, to lay waste the Schoharie settlements. Confronting Harper, with his eyes keenly fixed upon him, he enquired—"Are there any troops at Schoharie?" Harper's anxiety for the settlers prompted the ready answer—"Yes, three hundred continental troops from the eastward, arrived at the forts but three days since." The intelligence—false, although the occasion justified it—was unwelcome to the great chief, whose countenance indicated disappointment. The eleven prisoners were then pinioned, and secured in a hog-pen. Several tories were stationed to guard them during the night, among

\* Mr. Patchin was a fifer during the war, and a general of militia after its close. He was a very worthy man, and once represented his county in the Legislature.

whom was one Beacraft, a notorious villain, as his after conduct will show.

The Indians built a large fire near, and were in consultation for a long time, about what disposition should be made with the prisoners. Harper could understand much of their dialect, and overheard several of the Indians and Tories urging the death of the prisoners, as they did not consider the enterprise sufficiently accomplished. The opinion of Brant, which was that the party return immediately to Niagara, finally prevailed. Often during the night, while an awful suspense was hanging over the fate of the prisoners, would Beacraft comfort them with this and similar salutations—"You d—d rebels! you'll all be in hell before morning."

Lieut. Harper discovered, while the enemy were consulting the preceding evening, that his word was doubted by many of the party, and early in the morning he was ordered before an Indian council consisting of Brant and five other chiefs. He was told that his story about the arrival of troops at Schoharie was unbelievably. The question as to its truth was again asked, while the auditors—tomahawk in hand—awaited the answer. Harper, whose countenance indicated scorn at having his word thus doubted, replied that what he had before told them *was true*, and that if they any longer doubted it, *they should go there*, and have their doubts removed. Not a muscle of the brave man's countenance indicated fear or prevarication, and full credit was then given to the statement. Fortunate would it be if every falsehood was as productive of good, for *that alone* prevented the destroyers from entering the Schoharie valley, when it was feebly garrisoned, and where they intended to strike the first effectual blow in revenge of the injuries done them the year before, by the armies under Van Schaick and Sullivan.

The rest of the prisoners were now let out of the pig-stye, when Brant told them in English that the intended destination of the party was *Schoharie*, which he had been informed was but feebly garrisoned—that his followers were much disappointed at being obliged thus to return—that it had been with difficulty he and his chiefs had restrained the desire of their comrades to kill the pri-

soners and proceed to the Schoharie valley—that if they would accompany him to Niagara, they should be treated as prisoners of war, and fare as did their captors. The latter expressed a willingness to proceed. They were compelled to carry the heavy packs of the Indians, filled with plunder taken at the destruction of Harpersfield but a few days before, and all set forward for Canada. They were still bound, and as the snow was several feet deep, they at first found it very difficult to keep up with the Indians, who were provided with show-shoes. Some ten or fifteen miles from the place of capture, the party halted at a grist-mill, upon the Delaware river, owned by a tory. This royalist told Brant he might better have taken *more* scalps and *less* prisoners; and his daughters, sensitive creatures, even urged the more generous chieftain to *kill his prisoners then*, lest they might return at some future day and injure their family. The enemy obtained of this tory about three bushels of shelled corn, which was also put upon the backs of the prisoners, and they resumed their march. They had proceeded but a few miles down the river, when they met Samuel Clockstone, a tory well known to Brant and most of the prisoners. When Brant made known to him the intended expedition, and its termination from what Lieut Harper had told him, Clockstone replied—“depend upon it, there are no troops at Schoharie—I have heard of none.” With uplifted tomahawk Brant approached Harper, who was confronted by Clockstone. “*Why have you lied to me?*”—asked the Indian, with passion depicted in every feature and gesture. Harper, apprised of what the tory had said, in his reply, thus addressed the latter. “I have been to the forts but four days since, the troops had then arrived, and if Capt. Brant disbelieves me, he does so at his peril.” Noble, generous hearted fellow, thus to peril his own life to save the lives of others. He had alone visited the forts after the party were at the sugar-bush, which Clockstone happened to know, and the latter admitted that *possibly* troops had arrived. Brant was now satisfied that his prisoner had not deceived him, and the march was resumed.

In the vicinity of Harpersfield the Indians made prisoners an



aged man named Brown, and two little boys—his grand-sons. On the day after the party met Clockstone, as the traveling was very bad, Brown, having also a heavy pack to carry, found himself unable to keep up with the company, and begged permission of his captors to return; telling them that he was too old to take any part in the war, and could not injure the king's cause. On his making this request, the party halted and the old gentleman's pack was taken from him. Knowing the Indian character, he read his fate in the expressive gestures of his silent masters, and told his grand-sons, in a low voice, that they would never see him again, for the Indians were going to kill him. He took an affecting leave of the boys and was then compelled to fall in the rear, where he was left in the charge of an Indian, whose face, painted black, denoted him as being the executioner for the party. In a short time this Indian overtook his comrades with the *hairless scalp* of the murdered prisoner, hanging at the end of his gun.

The party proceeded down the Delaware river to the Cook-house flats, from whence they directed their course to Oquago. Constructing rafts, they floated down the Susquehanna to the mouth of the Chemung. The prisoners were unbound when on the raft, but rebound on leaving it.

The Indians, capable of enduring more fatigue than their prisoners on a scanty supply of food—being provided with snow-shoes, and having little baggage to carry, would probably have wearied out most of their prisoners, whose bodies, like that of poor Brown, would have been left to feast wild beasts, and their bones, like his, to bleach upon the mountains, had not Brant providentially fallen ill of fever and ague, which compelled the party for a time to lay by every other day on his account. They had been journeying about a fortnight, and were approaching a warmer latitude, when a rattle-snake, which had left its den in a warm spot, was killed, and a soup made of it, a free use of which effected a cure for the invalid.

The corn obtained near the head of the Delaware, was equally distributed among the whole party, by an allowance of about two handfuls a day, which was counted out by the berry to deal jus-



tice. This is a noble trait of the Indian character. He never grudgingly gives a scanty allowance to his prisoner, and satiates his own appetite, but shares equally his last morsel with him. The corn was boiled in small kettles carried by the Indians preparatory to eating.

While in the vicinity of Tioga-Point, the prisoners came near being sacrificed, to gratify the savage disposition to *revenge*, even on the innocent, an injury done to a friend. While the Indians were on their way down the Chemung, Brant detached *ten* of his warriors, mostly Senecas, to a place called Minisink,\* an old frontier settlement on the borders of New York and Pennsylvania, in the hope of making prisoners and plunder. They arrived in due time at the place of destination, and succeeded in obtaining several scalps and five prisoners, three men and two small children. The following particulars of their capture and escape, I find in a note subjoined to *Treat's Oration*, delivered at Geneseo in 1841, on exhuming the remains of Lieut. Boyd and his command.

“ The father of Major Van Campen was thrust through with a spear; and whilst the red warrior was, with his foot on the breast of his victim, endeavoring to extricate his spear, another savage had dashed out the brains of Moses Van Campen's brother with a tomahawk, and was aiming a blow at Moses' head. He seized the Indian's arm, and arrested the descending blow. Whilst thus engaged, his father's murderer thrust his spear at his side. But he avoided the weapon, being only slightly wounded. At this moment the chief interfered, and his life was spared.

“ After several days' march, the party of Senecas above mentioned, arrived near Tioga point, with Lieut. (now Major) Van Campen; a Dutchman by the name of Pence; Pike, a robust Yankee; and two small children. During the day, these prisoners marched with the party, bearing the baggage; and at the evening halt, were made to carry the wood for the fires.

“ Van Campen had, for some time, urged upon the two men, prisoners with him, to make an attempt to escape during the night, by tomahawking the Indians whilst sleeping. He depicted to them the horrors of a long captivity, and of the agonizing tortures to which they would probably be subjected. His companions, however, were at first alarmed at the danger of a contest with ten warriors. During the afternoon preceding the eventful night of

\* This word signifies, as I have been told, “ *The water is gone.*”

their delivery, he succeeded in persuading them to join him in the meditated blow, before they crossed the river and their retreat was thereby cut off. He advised them to remove the Indians' rifles; and with the head of the tomahawks, dash out their brains; for if the edges of the weapon were used, the time required to extricate the hatchet after each blow, would prove a dangerous delay. He was over-ruled by his comrades; and after some discussion among them, that plan was adopted, which was finally acted upon.

"At evening, the savages, according to their custom, lighted their fires, and bound the arms of the captives behind their backs. They then cut two forked stakes for each side of the fire, and placed between them (resting on the forks) two poles, against which they could lean their rifles. During the evening meal, one of the savages, after sharpening a stick on which to roast his meat, laid down his knife in the grass, near the feet of Van Campen, who saw it, and so turned his feet as to cover it, hoping the Indian would forget it before going to rest. After the meal was finished, the ten Indians having first examined their prisoners to ascertain if they were fast bound, lay down to sleep. Five were on each side of the fire—their heads under the poles, and his rifle standing at the head of each, ready to be grasped at the instant.

"About midnight, Van Campen sat up and looked around, to learn if all were asleep. Their loud snoring told him the hour to strike had arrived. He then, with his feet drew the knife within reach of his pinioned hands. Rising cautiously, he roused his companions. Pence cut the bands from Van Campen's arms, and the latter then cut loose his two comrades. There had been a slight fall of snow, which had frozen among the leaves, and rendered every footstep fearfully audible. But they succeeded in removing all the rifles to a tree at a short distance from the fire, without awaking one of the warriors. During the afternoon, several of the rifles had been discharged in killing a deer, and, through forgetfulness, left unloaded. The plan proposed was, that Pence, who was an excellent marksman, should lie down on the left of one row of Indians, with three rifles; and, at the given signal, fire. They supposed the same ball would pass through at least two savages. In the mean time, Van Campen should tomahawk three of those on the other side and Pike, two. Then there would be but three Indians remaining, and each of the captives was to fasten on his foe—Van Campen and Pike with their tomahawks, and Pence with one of the undischarged rifles. Fortunately, for their safety, Pence had taken the two unloaded rifles.

"All things being ready, Van Campen's tomahawk dashed out the brains of one of the Indians at a single blow; but Pence's rifle snapped without discharging. At the noise, one of the two assigned to Pike's charge, with a sudden "*ugh!*" extended his hand for his rifle. Pike's heart failing him at this awful crisis: he crouched to the ground and stirred not. But Van Campen saw the Indian starting to his feet; and, as quick as thought, drove the

tomahawk through his head. Just as the fifth blow of Van Campen had despatched the last savage on his side of the fire, Pence tried the third rifle, and the ball passed through the heads of four. The fifth on that side, John Mohawk, bounded to his feet, and rushed towards the rifles. Van Campen darted between him and the tree, and Mohawk turned in flight. Van Campen pursued him, and drove the tomahawk through his shoulder. Mohawk immediately grappled his adversary; and, in the struggle, both fell—Van Campen undermost. Each knew his life depended on the firmness of his grasp; and they clung to each other with unrelaxed nerve, and writhed to break free. Van Campen lay under the wounded shoulder, and was almost suffocated with the Indian's blood which streamed over his face. He eagerly stretched his hand around Mohawk's body to reach the knife of the latter; for the tomahawk had fallen from his hand in the struggle. But as they fell, the Indian's belt had been twisted around his body, and the knife was beyond his reach. At length they break away, and both spring to their feet. Mohawk's arms had been round Van Campen's neck, and the arm of the latter over the back of the former. As they gained their feet, Van Campen seized the tomahawk and pursued the again retreating Indian. His first impulse was to hurl the hatchet at his foe; but he saw at once the imprudence of the course. If it missed its object, it would be turned in a moment against his own life; and he therefore gave over the pursuit, and one alone of the ten Senecas escaped.

"On returning to his comrades, he found Pike on his knees begging for his life, and Pence standing over him with loaded rifle, ready to fire. Pence answered V. C.'s inquiry into his conduct, by saying, "De tam Yankee bee's a cowart, and I musht kill um." With difficulty Van Campen prevailed upon the Dutchman to spare the frightened and dastardly Pike. They then scalped their victims; and, taking their rifles, set forward with the two boys, on their return home, which they reached in safety. Among the scalps which were strung to the belt of one of the warriors, were those of Van Campen's father and brother."

Mohawk, the sachem who had escaped from Van Campen, was occupying a little hut near Tioga Point, where the Minisink party were to await Brant's arrival, endeavoring to cure his wound, when he returned with his prisoners. As the party under Brant drew near that place, the war whoop was sounded, and was soon answered by a pitiful howl—the death yell of the lone Indian. The party halted in mute astonishment, when the Indian, with the *nine pairs* of mocasons, taken from the feet of his dead comrades, came forward and related the adventures of himself and friends, and the terrible disaster that had overtaken them. Instantly, the

whole band under Brant seemed transformed to so many devils incarnate, gathering round their prisoners with frantic gestures, and cutting the air with their weapons of death. At this critical moment, when the fate of the prisoners seemed inevitable from the known rule of Indian warfare, Mohawk threw himself into the midst of the circle, and made a signal for silence. This Indian knew most of the prisoners, having lived about Schoharie before the war. He told his attentive auditors, that the prisoners were not the men who had killed his friends, and that to take the lives of innocent men to revenge the guilt of others, could not be right: he therefore desired them to spare their lives. The storm of passion which seemed ready but a moment before to overwhelm the prisoners, now yielded to the influence of *reason*, and the tomahawks of the savages were returned to their girdles.

The company again moved forward, the prisoners grateful to the Almighty for their deliverance from such obvious perils. On arriving near Newtown, the whole party, Indians as well as prisoners, were on the point of starvation, when an unusual number of wolf-tracks arrested their attention. They led to the half-devoured carcase of a dead horse, supposed to have been a pack horse, left by accident the fall before by the army under Gen. Sullivan. The under side of the animal, frozen, and buried in snow, was found in a good state of preservation. It was instantly cut up, and equally distributed, even to the fleshless bones, among the whole party. Fires were built—the meat cooked—and the nearly famished travelers feasted upon the remains of this horse, with far more satisfaction than would the epicure upon his most dainty meats.

In the present county of Steuben, the prisoners saw the "Painted Post," which had been erected by the Indians, to commemorate some signal battle fought upon the spot. Leaving the route of Sullivan on the Chemung, they proceeded farther north. On their journey, the Tories, Beacraft,\* and Barney Cane, boast-

\* *Priest* states, that Beacraft boasted at this time of killing a Vrooman boy in Schoharie. He had no lack of evil deeds at that period, but that writer must have misunderstood Gen. Patchin in that part of the narrative.



ed of the acts of cruelty each had then perpetrated during the war. The party descended to the Genesee river nearly famished, and there met a company of Indians that had arrived to make preparations to plant corn. The latter had brought with them from Niagara, a fine looking horse, which Brant instantly ordered killed, and distributed to his again starving men and prisoners. No part of the animal, not even the intestines were suffered to be lost. They roasted the meat, using white ashes as a substitute for salt. They also found upon the Genesee flats, small ground nuts, which they roasted and ate with their horse flesh.

From this place, Brant sent forward a runner to Niagara, a distance of eighty miles, to announce the result of his expedition, the number of prisoners, and their character. Brant was in possession of a secret which he kept in his own breast, that doubtless operated as an incentive for him to save the life of Lieut. Harper and his men. Among the prisoners taken at the massacre of Cherry-Valley, in the fall of 1778, was Miss Jane Moore, whose mother was a sister of Harper. Not long after her arrival at Niagara, she was courted, and became the wife of Capt. Powel, a British officer of merit.\*

Beacraft did kill a boy named Vrooman in Schoharie in the manner there described, but it was not until the 9th day of the following August, as will be shown. He also boasted of the act after it was committed. He was a notorious villain, and partial justice was awarded him subsequently.

\* "In person, Brant was about the middling size, of a square, stout build, fitted rather for enduring hardships than for quick movements. His complexion was lighter than that of most of the Indians, which resulted, perhaps, from his less exposed manner of living. This circumstance, probably, gave rise to a statement, which has been often repeated, that he was of mixed origin. [The old people in the Mohawk valley to whom he was known, generally agree in maintaining that he was not a full blooded Indian, but was part white.] He was married in the winter of 1779, to a daughter of Col. Croghan, by an Indian woman. The circumstances of this marriage are somewhat singular. He was present at the wedding of Miss Moore from Cherry-Valley, who had been carried away a prisoner, and who married an officer of the garrison at Fort Niagara.

"Brant had lived with his wife for some time previous, according to the Indian custom, without marriage; but now insisted that the marriage ceremony should be performed. This was accordingly done by Col. Butler, who was still considered a magistrate. After the war he removed with his na-



Brant suggested to his runner to the fort, that Capt. Powel should send the warriors from both Indian camps contiguous, down the lake to the Nine Mile Landing—there to await his arrival with the prisoners. Having obtained permission from Col. Butler to do so, Powel gave the Indians a quantity of rum to aid, as they supposed, in their celebration, and away they went. The danger Brant justly apprehended, was, from the impossibility of restraining the violent acts of many of the Indians, while the prisoners were running the *gantlet*, knowing that relations of the Minisink party would be present burning with revenge, and all were smarting under the chastisement they had received the preceding year. He knew that no act, however atrocious, would be considered by many of his warriors, too severe to inflict at this time on the prisoners. That Harper was a relative of Mrs. Powel, Brant concealed from every individual of his party.

Four days after the messenger had been sent forward, they arrived near Niagara, when the tories began to tantalize the prisoners, by telling them that in all probability few of them would survive running the *gantlet*. On arriving at the first encampment the prisoners were as happily disappointed to find that the lines through which they were to pass were composed of old women and children, who would not be likely to inflict much injury, as were the tories to find the revengeful warriors all absent. Most of the prisoners escaped with little injury, except Freegift Patchin. He was approached by an old squaw, who, as she exclaim-

tion to Canada. There he was employed in transacting important business for his tribe. He went out to England after the war, and was honorably received there."—*Memoirs of Dr. Wheelock*—see *N. Y. Hist. Coll.*

Joseph Brant died on the 24th November, 1807, at his residence near the head of Lake Ontario, in the 65th year of his age. Not long before that event, the British government refused, for the first time, to confirm a sale of lands made by that chief, which mortified him very much. The sale was afterwards *confirmed*, at which he was so much elated, that he got into a *frolick*, that is said to have laid the foundation for his sickness, and resulted in his death. The wife of Brant, who was very dignified in her appearance, would not converse in English before strangers, notwithstanding she could speak it fluently.

ed "*poor shild*," gave him a terrible blow upon the head. As the prisoners drew near the second encampment, they were gratified to perceive that, through the policy of Capt. Powel, a regiment of British troops was thrown into parallel lines to protect them. When Patchin had arrived within a few rods of the gateway, an Indian boy ran up and gave him a blow on the forehead with a hatchet, which had nearly proven fatal. A soldier standing by, snatched the weapon from the hand of the young savage and threw it into the lake. The unexpected meeting of Harper with friends among the enemies of his country, was no doubt very gratifying.

On arriving at the fort, the prisoners were brought before several British officers, among whom sat Col. John Butler as presiding officer. The colonel put several abusive questions to the prisoners, and addressing Freegift Patchin, who stood nearest his seat, he asked him "if he did not think that by and by his Indians would compel a general surrender of the Yankees?" Smarting under his wounds, he replied that "he did not wish to answer for fear of giving offence." The unfeeling officer insisted on an answer, and the young American, whose patriotic blood was rising to fever heat, replied—"If I must answer you, it is to say, *No*—you might as well think to empty the adjoining lake of its waters with a bucket, as attempt to conquer the Yankees in that manner." Butler flew into a passion, called Patchin "a d—d rebel" for giving him such an insolent reply, and ordered him out of his sight. At this instant, a generous hearted British officer interfered. Said he to Col. B., "the lad is not to blame for answering your question, which you pressed to an answer: he has no doubt answered it candidly, according to his judgment." Extending a glass of wine to Patchin, whose spirit he admired—"Here, my poor fellow," said he, "take this glass of wine and drink it." Such unexpected kindness received his grateful remembrance. The examination of the prisoners having ended, Mrs. Nancy Bundy,\* who was also a prisoner at the time, prepared

\*This woman stated to Freegift Patchin, "that herself, her husband, and two children were captured at the massacre of Wyoming, and brought to the

as speedily as possible, a soup made of proper materials for them.

The captors received as their reward for the delivery of the Schoharie party eight dollars per head. This it is believed was the stipulated reward for American scalps or prisoners, to be paid for by Col. John Butler,\* the British agent for that business, during the war: but it was often the case that the delivery of a committee-man's scalp or his person, or that of an officer or noted soldier, entitled the possessor to a larger sum. From Niagara, the prisoners, except Harper, were sent from post to post, and finally lodged in prison at Chamblee. Here they remained in irons nearly two years, suffering most acutely for the necessities of life. Free. Patchin was reduced to such a state, as to be unable to rise from the floor without the aid of one of the Thorps.

Doctor Pendergrass, a physician who had the care of the prisoners, totally neglected to require into their real condition, the consequence was that some of them became objects of loathing, even to themselves. Of the latter number was Free. Patchin. A worthy physician at length succeeded Pendergrass in his station, and the sufferings of the prisoners was at once mitigated. On his first visit to the prisoners confined in the room with the Patchins, Steele, the commanding officer of the fort, accompanied him. The doctor proceeded to examine the prisoners singly. Ashamed

Genesee country. There she had been parted from her husband, the Indians carrying him she knew not where. She had not been long in the possession of the tribe with whom she had been left, when the Indian who had taken her prisoner was desirous of making her his wife; but she repulsed him, saying, very imprudently, she had one husband, and it would be unlawful to have more than one. This seemed to satisfy him, and she saw him no more for a long time. After a while he came again, and renewed his suit, alleging that now there was no objection to her marrying him, as her husband was dead, 'for,' said he, 'I found where he was, and have killed him.' She then told him, if he had killed her husband he might kill her also, for she would not marry a murderer. When he saw that his person was hateful to her, he tied her, took her to Niagara, and sold her for eight dollars. The fate of her children she did not know.—*Priest.*"

\* This man, who died some years after the war near Niagara, partially received punishment in this life for his cruelties in the Revolution, for he was *six weeks dying*—or rather continued to breathe in the most acute suffering for that length of time, every hour of which it was thought would prove his last. A fact communicated by a friend who was in Niagara at the time.

of being seen, Free. Patchin was occupying the darkest corner of the room, and had thrown an old blanket around him, to hide his naked limbs. The doctor at length approached him. "Well, my lad," he asked, "what is the matter with you?" "Nothing, sir," was the reply. "Then get upon your feet," added the doctor. "I cannot do it," replied Patchin. The former then thrust the end of his cane under the blanket and removed it, discovering his pitiful condition. The doctor possessed a humane heart, and his sympathy for the prisoner was instantly aroused. Turning to Steele, with a look that denoted surprise and anger, he demanded to know why this prisoner had been so cruelly neglected, ordering his shackles instantly removed. The language and treatment of this medical officer was so unexpected, and so different from what he had previously experienced, that Patchin could not refrain from weeping like a child. With proper treatment his health was soon improved.

From Chamblee the prisoners were taken to Rebel Island where they remained until peace was proclaimed. From that place they were sent to Quebec, *via* Montreal, and put on board of a cartel ship bound for Boston: where they arrived after many perils at sea. They then directed their course to Albany, and from thence to Schoharie, where they arrived nearly three years after their capture. Gen. Patchin was married after the war, and settled in Blenheim, Schoharie county, where he resided until the close of his life. His widow assured the writer, that Mr. Patchin's constitution received a shock while a prisoner, from which he never entirely recovered.

A large body of the enemy having been seen in the latter part of March, in the vicinity of Putman's creek, as stated in a letter from Col. Van Schaick, of Albany, to Col. Fisher, the former recommended sending a reasonable force to the Sacandaga block-house. Col. Fisher accordingly despatched to that post one-third of his regiment, and ordered Lieut. Col. Veeder to repair thither, and take the command. The remainder of the regiment was ordered out, and stationed at Fort Johnson and other commanding points near the Mohawk, until the 1st of April, and then dispers-



ed. The enemy, however, had lingered about the settlements, as the following letter will show :

*Caughnawaga, 3d April, 1780.*

" Sir—On Tuesday night last, the block-house [at Sacandaga] was attacked by a scouting party of Indians, to the number of seven, as near as could be ascertained, [proved to be five] and endeavored to set it on fire in two different places, which they would have effected had it not been for the activity of one brave man who lived there, named Solomon Woodworth, who, although alone, sallied out and extinguished the fire. Whilst he was doing it, five shots were fired at him, one of which only touched him. On his return into the house he fired at them, one of whom he wounded in the thigh, on which the rest fled and took the wounded Indian with them. The reason of the block-house being without men at that time, was through the neglect of one of the militia officers, which I have taken notice of already in a particular manner. I immediately sent out a party after them, who returned without success for the want of snow shoes. Seven volunteers [six, as stated in a subsequent letter] turned out on last Thursday, and came up with them on Saturday about 12 o'clock, when five of the Indians fired upon my men, and the whole missed, upon which the brave volunteers run up and fired upon them with buck-shot and wounded every one of them, took, and killed the whole, and brought in all their packs and guns without ever receiving the least hurt. This intelligence I just received from Col. Veeder, by express from the block-house, where he commands sixty men.

" You'll please order up some rum and ammunition for the use of my regiment of militia, being very necessary as the men are daily scouting. Your commands at any time shall be punctually obeyed, by

" Your most humble servant,

" FREDERICK FISHER, *Colonel.*

" *Col. Goshen Van Schaick*—sent by express."

In a letter from Col. Fisher to Col. Van Schaick, dated April 13th, the names of the volunteers in the above enterprise are given, and are as follows : Solomon Woodworth, John Eikler, Peter Pruyn, David Putman, Rulf Vores, and Joseph Mayall. The Indians were overtaken and killed about forty miles north of Sacandaga.

At this period of the war, Marcus Bellinger was supervisor, and William Dietz, a Justice of the Peace for Schoharie. Agreeable to an act of Congress, passed Feb. 12, 1780, assessors were appointed in the frontier districts to ascertain, as nearly as possible,



how much grain each family might need for its consumption, that the remainder of the stock might be in readiness for their less provident neighbors or the army. Bellinger gave written certificates to the requisite quantity for each family in his district, and Dietz gave written permits to such as had not a supply, to draw one.

The following particulars were narrated to the author in 1841, by *Moses Nelson*, then a resident of Otsego county. He stated, that on the morning Cherry-Valley was destroyed, in the fall of 1778, he, then in his 14th year, was at the fort; that when the alarm was given of the enemy's approach, he ran home—some half a mile distant—and, with his mother, then a widow with whom he was living, fled to Lady hill, east of the village; where they remained concealed until the enemy had left. Nelson had *four* half-brothers at the time, older than himself, who were all in the service of their country. In the month of March following, he enlisted in the bateau service, for a term of ten months, on the Hudson river, rendezvousing at Fishkill. After the time of his enlistment expired, he again returned to Cherry-Valley, and was living with his mother at that place, where a few daring spirits still continued their residence, when, on the 24th of April, 1780, a party of *seventy-nine* hostile Indians and *two* Tories, broke in upon the settlement. One of the latter, named Bowman, a former resident of the Mohawk valley, was the leader of the band. They had previously been to the vicinity of the Mohawk, where they had made several prisoners; and passing along Bowman's creek—called at its outlet the Canajoharie creek—they captured several more, among whom were two persons named Young. This party killed *eight* individuals and took *fourteen* prisoners in this expedition, and among the former was the mother of my informant, whose bloody scalp he was compelled to see *torn off*, and *borne off* as a trophy.

This band of furies consisted of warriors from various tribes; and among the number were two Stockbridge Indians, one of whom claimed Nelson as his prisoner. The route pursued by the enemy, after completing the work of destruction at that doomed place, was down the Cherry-Valley creek: and from Otsego lake,

down the Susquehanna to the Tioga, and thence westward via the Genesee flats to Niagara.

The enemy while returning to Canada, separated into small parties, the better to procure the means of subsistence. The two Stockbridge Indians with whom he journeyed, made a canoe from a bass-wood tree, in which, with their prisoner, they floated down the Susquehanna. At Indian villages, the party usually assembled. At two of those, Nelson had to run the gantlet, but he escaped with little injury. One of the prisoners, an aged man, who ran with a heavy pack on his back, was nearly killed. When Nelson was about to run, his master, who was called Capt. David, took off his pack to give him a fair chance for his life; and on one occasion placed himself at the entrance of a wigwam to which the prisoners were to flee, to witness the feat. Owing to his fleetness, he was not much injured. Said his master as he approached the goal, *you did run well*. Many of the party—and among the number was his master David, tarried nearly two weeks to plant corn, in the Genesee valley—at which time he was sent forward with David's brother to Niagara, where he arrived after a journey of *eighteen days* from his captivity.

As one of the Stockbridge Indians was an excellent hunter, Nelson did not suffer for the want of provisions, such as they were. The party, on their start from Cherry-Valley, took along several hogs and sheep, which were killed and then roasted whole, after burning off the hair and wool. On his arrival at Niagara, Nelson was told by his master that he was adopted as an Indian, and was at liberty to hunt, fish, or enlist into the British service. Not long after this he was sold into the forester service of the enemy, the duties of which were "to procure wood, water, &c., for the garrison, and do the boating;" being attached to what was called the Indian department. He was sent on one occasion with a party to Buffalo. He was for a while, with several other captives whose situation was like his own, in the employ of Col. John Butler. More than a year of his captivity was spent in the vicinity of Niagara.

In the spring of 1782, when the enemy set about rebuilding

Fort Oswego, three officers, Capt. Nellis, Lieut. James Hare, and Ensign Robert Nellis, a son of the captain, all of the forester service, had charge of the Indians there employed. Nelson and two other lads, also prisoners, accompanied this party, which was conveyed in a sloop, as waiters. About one hundred persons were employed in rebuilding this fortress, which occupied most of the season. The winter following, Nelson remained at this fort, and was in it when Col. Willet advanced with a body of troops in February, 1783, with the intention of taking it by surprise. The enterprise is said to have proved abortive in consequence of Col Willet's guide, who was an Oneida Indian, having lost his way in the night when within only a few miles of the fort. The men were illy provided for their return—certain victory having been anticipated, and their sufferings were, in consequence, very severe. This enterprise was undertaken, says *Col. Stone*, agreeably to the orders of Gen. Washington; but it certainly added no laurels to the chaplet of the brave Willet.

Col. Willett, *possibly*, may not have known that Fort Oswego had been so strongly fitted up the preceding year, and consequently the difficulties he had to encounter before its capture—be that as it may, the *probability* is, that had the attack been made, the impossibility of scaling the walls, would have frustrated the design, with the loss of many brave men. The fort was surrounded by a deep moat, in the centre of which were planted heavy pickets. From the lower part of the walls projected downward and outward, another row of pickets. A draw-bridge enabled the inmates to pass out and in, which was drawn up and secured to the wall every night, and the corners were built out so that mounted cannon commanded the trenches. Two of Willett's men, badly frozen, entered the fort in the morning, surrendering themselves prisoners, from whom the garrison learned the object of the enterprise. The ladders prepared by Willett to scale the walls, were left on his return, and a party of British soldiers went and brought them in. The longest of them," said *Nelson*, "when placed against the walls *inside the pickets*, reached only about two thirds of the way to the top." The post was strongly garrisoned,

and it was the opinion of Mr. N. that the accident or treachery which misled the troops, was most providential, tending to save Col. Willett from defeat, and most of his men from certain death.

While Nelson was with the two Indians on his way from Cherry-Valley to Niagara, David, his owner, afterwards told him that the other Indian wanted to kill him. He said he replied to his brother—"You must first kill me, then you will have *two scalps* and *be a big man*." On their route to Canada, they passed the body of a white man, who had been killed by some other party.

Peace was proclaimed in the spring of 1783, and Nelson, with many other prisoners—none however, who were taken when he was—returned home via Ticonderoga and Fort Edward. Previous to his return he visited Montreal, where he was paid for labor done in the British service the year before.

Several times in April, of this year, the Mohawk river settlements were alarmed by anticipated invasions, but those alarms died away and were not renewed until near the middle of May. The following correspondence addressed to "Col. Fisher, at Caughnawaga," gives the earliest reliable testimony of the enemy's approach.

"Fort Paris, May 15th, 1780.

"Sir—I have intelligence which I believe is very certain, that the enemy are on their way, and will attack in four different places in this county within a few days. I hope you will exert yourself to discover them, and make every possible preparation to defeat their design.

"It is expected that they will come by the way of Sacandaga.

"I am your hble servt.

"JACOB KLOCK, Col."

Bearing the same date, Col. Fisher received an anonymous letter written at Caughnawaga, stating that an invasion of the enemy *under Sir John Johnson was hourly expected*, adding as a corroborating circumstance, that a number of his near neighbors, five of whom were named, had gone away the night before to join the invaders. The writer added, that he had written some days previous what he suspected, and that the enemy would be very strong.

Among the Fisher papers on this subject I also find the following



*Schenectada, 17th May, 1780.*

"Dear Sir—Just this moment returned from Albany, Col. Van Schaick has requested of me to write to you, requesting you to send me by the bearer, Sergt. Carkeright, an account of all the persons that have gone to the enemy from your county, with their names, which request I wish you to comply with; also let me know if any thing of the alarm has turned up.

"I am, dear sir, your friend,

"H. GLEN."

"Col. VISGER."

Nothing more was heard of the enemy until Sunday night the 21st day of May, when Sir John Johnson, at the head of about five hundred troops, British, Indians and tories, entered the Johnstown settlements from the expected northern route. The objects of the invasion doubtless were, the recovery of property concealed on his leaving the country, the murder of certain whig partizans, the plunder of their dwellings, and the capture of several individuals as prisoners: intending, by the execution of part of the enterprize, to terrify his former neighbors.

About midnight the destructives arrived in the north east part of the town, from which several of the tories had disappeared the day before, to meet and conduct their kindred spirits to the dwellings of their patriotic neighbors: for when Johnson was censured for the murder of those men, he replied that "their tory neighbors and not himself were blameable for those acts." A party of the enemy proceeded directly to the house of Lodowick Putman, an honest Dutchman, living two miles and a half from the court house. Putman had three sons and two daughters. On the night the enemy broke into his house, two of his sons were fortunately gone *sparkling* a few miles distant. Old Mr. Putman, who was a whig of the times, and his son Aaron who was at home, were taken from their beds, murdered, and scalped. While the Indians were plundering the house and pulling down clothing from hooks along the wall, Mrs. Putman snatched several articles of female apparel, such as gowns, petticoats, &c. from the hands of a large Indian, telling him that such and such things she must and would have for her daughter. The fierce looking savage, whom few women of the present day would care to meet, much less to contend with,



offered some resistance to her gaining several garments, and they jerked each other about the room; but seeing her determination to possess them, he finally yielded to her entreaties and prowess, and with a sullen "*Umph!*" let go his hold. After the enemy had been gone sometime from the house, Mrs. Putman and her daughter Hannah, afterwards the wife of Jacob Shew, Esq., leaving the mangled remains of their murdered friends, proceeded to the Johnstown fort, where they arrived about sun-rise. The jail was palisaded, and, with several block-houses built within the inclosure, constituted the Johnstown fort.

At this period, one of Putman's daughters was married to Amasa Stevens, also a whig, living in the neighborhood. While some of the enemy were at Putman's, another party approached the dwelling of Stevens, and forcing the doors and windows, entered it from different directions at the same instant. Poor Stevens was also dragged from his bed, and compelled to leave his house. Mrs. Stevens, in the act of leaving the bed, desired a stout savage, or a painted tory, as she afterwards supposed, not to allow the Indians to hurt her husband. He forced her back upon the bed with her terrified children, a boy, named after his grandfather, two and a half years old, and an infant daughter named Clarissa, telling her *she* should not be hurt. A few rods from the house Stevens was murdered, scalped and hung upon the garden fence. After the enemy had left the dwelling, Mrs. Stevens looked out to see if she could discover any one about the premises. She had supposed her husband taken by them into captivity; but seeing in the uncertain star-light the almost naked form of a man leaning upon the fence, she readily imagined it to be that of her husband. In a tremulous voice she several times called "*Amasa! Amasa!*" but receiving no answer she ran to the fence. God only knows what her mental agony was, on arriving there and finding her husband stiffening in death. With almost supernatural strength she took down the body and bore it into the dwelling, (which, with Putman's, had been spared the incendiary torch from motives of policy,) and depositing it, sprinkled with the scalding tears of blighted affection, she snatched the two pledges of her early love

and sought safety in flight to the fort ; where she found her surviving relatives.

The amorous Putman brothers set out on their return home towards day-light, from what is now called Sammons' Hollow, and discovering the light of the burning buildings at Tribes' Hill, they hastily directed their steps to the fort, meeting at the gate-way their mourning relatives.

Stevens had just finished planting when murdered, and the next week purposed to have journeyed eastward with his family. The Putmans were killed on the farm now owned and occupied by Col. Archibald McIntyre. They were both buried in one grave in a single rough box ; and while their neighbors were performing the act of burial, they were once alarmed by the supposed approach of the enemy and left the grave, but soon returned and filled it.—*Clarissa, relict of Joseph Leach, and daughter of Amasa Stevens.*

Dividing his forces, Col. Johnson sent part of them, mostly Indians and tories, to Tribes' Hill ; under the direction, as believed, of Henry and William Bowen, two brothers who had formerly lived in that vicinity and removed with the Johnsons to Canada. These destructives were to fall upon the Mohawk river settlements at the Hill, and proceed up its flats, while Johnson led the remainder in person by a western route to Caughnawaga, the appointed place for them to unite. The Bowens led their followers through Albany Bush, a tory settlement in the eastern part of the town, where, of course, no one was molested, and directed their steps to the dwelling of Capt. Garret Putman, a noted whig. Putman, who had a son named Victor, also a whig, had been ordered to Fort Hunter but a few days before, and had removed his family thither ; renting his house to William Gault, an old English gardener who had resided in Cherry-Valley before its destruction, and Thomas Plateau, also an Englishman. Without knowing that the Putman house had changed occupants, the enemy surrounded it, forced an entrance, and tomahawked and scalped its inmates. The house was then pillaged and set on fire, and its plunderers knew not until next day, that they had obtained the scalps of

two Tories. In the morning, Gault, who was near eighty years old, was discovered alive outside the dwelling, and was taken across the river to Fort Hunter, where his wounds were properly dressed, but he soon after died.

Among the early settlers in the Mohawk valley was Harman Visscher, who died before the Revolution, leaving an aged widow, three sons, Frederick a colonel\* of militia, John a captain, and Harman; and two sisters, Margaret and Rebecca. Frederick the elder brother, who was born on the 22d of February, 1741; was married and resided a little distance below the paternal dwelling, which stood nearly on the site of the present residence of the Hon. Jesse D. De Graff. The other Fisher brothers were unmarried, and, with their mother and sisters, lived at the homestead. The Fisher family was one of much influence, and warmly advocated the popular cause. The following anecdote will show the position of the elder brother, at an early period of the contest. Soon after the difficulties commenced at Boston, a meeting of the citizens along the Mohawk valley was called at Tribes' Hill, on which occasion Col. John Butler was present, and harangued the multitude on the duties of subjects to their sovereign, &c., and then proposed a test for his hearers, some three hundred in number. Having formed a line, he desired those who were willing to oppose the king, to remain standing, and those who favored royal pretensions to advance a few paces forward. The result was, *Frederick Fisher stood alone*, as the only avowed opposer of the British government.—*David, his son.*

A few days before the invasion of Johnson, a bateau from Schenectada was seen opposite Col. Fisher's, taking in his most valuable effects; and his neighbors, living along the south side of the river, among whom was Nicholas Quackenboss, crossed over to learn the cause of his removal. On his arrival, the neighbor enquired of Col. Fisher if an enemy was expected, that

\* Some of the family write this name Visscher, and others Fisher. The original Dutch name was Visger. Harman Visscher's son Frederick, the colonel, wrote his name Fisher until just before his death, at which time he desired his children to spell the name as in the context. Fisher is the English of Visscher.

he was thus preparing to move his family and effects? The colonel replied that he knew of no hostile movement unknown to his neighbors. After a little conversation of the kind, and when about to recross the river, said Quackenboss, clenching his fist in a threatening manner and addressing him playfully in Low Dutch, "Ah, colonel! if you know something of the enemy and don't let us know it, I hope you'll be the first one scalped!" Having sent his family to Schenectada, Col. Fisher went to the homestead, thinking himself and brothers would be the better able to defend themselves, if attacked by an enemy.

On Sunday evening, about eight o'clock, Captain Walter Vrooman, of Guilderland, arrived at the Fisher dwelling with a company of eighty men, on his way to the Johntown fort. He had intended to quarter his men over night at Fisher's, for their own comfort and the safety of the family; but the colonel, observing that himself and brothers could probably defend the house if attacked, forwarded the troops to Johntown, knowing that that place was feebly garrisoned.

After the murder of Gault and Plateau, the enemy proceeded up the river to the dwelling of Capt. Henry Hansen, which stood where John Fisher now resides.\* On reaching the dwelling of Hansen, who was an American captain, the enemy forced an entrance—and taking him from his bed they murdered and scalped him. His sons, Victor and John L., then at home were captured. Margaret, a daughter, was hurried out of the house by an Indian, who told her it was on fire. She asked him to aid her in carrying out the bed on which she had been sleeping, and he did so. Depositing it in an old Indian hut near by, and learning that her mother was still in the burning building, finding access through the door too dangerous, she broke a window in her room and

\* Henry Hansen was a son of Nicholas Hansen, who with his brother Hendrick, took two patents, each for one thousand acres of land along the north side of the Mohawk, above Tribes' Hill. The patents were executed by Gov. Hunter, and dated July 12, 1713. The brothers settled on those lands soon after, and Henry Hansen was the first white child born on the north side of the Mohawk west of Fort Hunter, and east of the German settlements, many miles above.



called to her. As may be supposed, the old lady was greatly terrified and bewildered at first; but recovering, she groped her way to the window, and was helped out by her daughter, who assisted her to the hut—from whence, after day light she was conveyed to a place of safety. The enemy made no female scalps or captives at this time, and offered indignities to but few of the sex. In the garret of Hansen's dwelling was a keg of powder, which exploded with terrific effect.

Proceeding west along the river, the enemy next halted at the dwelling of Barney Hansen, which stood where Benj. R. Jenkins now lives. Hansen, who chanced to be from home, had a son about ten years of age, who was then going to school at Fort Hunter. On Saturday evening preceding the invasion, Peter, a son of Cornelius Putman, of *Ca-daugh-ri-ty*,\* about the same age as young Hansen, went home with the latter, crossing the river in a boat, to tarry with him over Sunday. The lads slept in a bunk, which, on retiring to rest on Sunday night, was drawn before the outside door; and the first intimation the family had of the enemy's proximity, was their heavy blows upon the door with an axe, just before daylight, sending the splinter's upon the boys' bed, causing them to bury their heads beneath the bedding. An entrance was quickly forced, and the house plundered. The boys were led out by two Indians, and claimed as prisoners, but owing to the earnest entreaties of Mrs. Hansen that they might be left, a British officer interfered, saying that they were too young to endure the journey: they were then liberated. This house was built and owned by Joseph Clement, a tory, who was supposed to have been present; consequently, it was not burned.

From the house of Barney Hansen, the enemy proceeded to that of Col. Fisher, where Adam Zielie now resides, and where, too, they were disappointed in not finding any of the family: plunder-

\**Ca-daugh-ri-ty*, is an Indian word, and signifies *The Steep Bank, back wall, or perpendicular wall!* In the southeast part of Glen is a high bank on the Schoharie, a mile or two from its mouth or the ancient Fort Hunter, occasioned by an extensive slide at least one hundred years ago, the Indian name for which originated at the time.



ing and setting it on fire, they hastened onward to the Fisher homestead, where they arrived just at daylight. Among the plunder made at Hansen's, was the clothing of young Putman, and as the Indians threw away such articles as they considered useless, he followed them at a distance, recovering and putting on his apparel as fast as rejected. He obtained the last of it near the dwelling of Col. Fisher—entering which he discovered it to be on fire. Looking for pails he found several which the enemy had broken, but a further search discovered a tub of sour milk: this he drew near the fire, and throwing it on the flames, with his hands extinguished them—not, however, until a large hole had been burned entirely through the floor. This house was consumed in October following.

About twenty of the enemy first arrived at the old Fisher place, and attempted to force an entrance by cutting in the door, but being fired upon from a window by the intrepid inmates, they retreated round a corner of the house, where they were less exposed. the main body of the enemy, nearly three hundred in number, arrived soon after and joined in the attack. The brothers defended the house for some length of time after the enemy gained entrance below, and a *melee* followed in the stairway, on their attempting to ascend. Several balls were fired up through the floor,—the lower room not being plastered over head, which the brothers avoided by standing over the large timbers which supported it. At this period the sisters escaped from the cellar-kitchen, and fled to the woods not far distant. They were met in their flight by a party of savages, who snatched from the head of one, a bonnet; and from the bosom of the other a neckerchief—but were allowed to escape unhurt. Mrs. Fisher, about to follow her daughters from the house, was stricken down at the door by a blow on the head from the butt of a musket, and left without being scalped.

The brothers returned the fire of their assailants for a while with spirit, but getting out of ammunition their castle was no longer tenable; and Harman, jumping from a back window, attempted to escape by flight. In the act of leaping a garden fence, a few rods from the house, he was shot, and there killed and scalp-

ed. As the enemy ascended the stairs, Col. Fisher discharged a pistol he held in his hand, and calling for quarters, threw it behind him in token of submission. An Indian, running up, struck him a blow on the head with a tomahawk, which brought him to the floor. He fell upon his face, and the Indian took two crown scalps from his head, which no doubt entitled him to a double reward, then giving him a gash in the back of the neck, he turned him and attempted to cut his throat, which was only prevented by his cravat, the knife penetrating just through the skin. His brother, Capt. Fisher, as the enemy ascended the stairs, retreated to one corner of the room, in which was a quantity of peas, that he might there repel his assailants. An Indian, seeing him armed with a sword, hurled a tomahawk at his head, which brought him down. He was then killed outright, scalped as he lay upon the grain, and there left. The house was plundered, and then set on fire, (as stated by Wm. Bowen, who returned after the war,) *with a chemical match, conveyed upon the roof by an arrow.*

Leaving the progress of the destructives for a time, let us follow the fortunes of Col. Fisher. After the enemy had left, his consciousness returned, and as soon as strength would allow, he ascertained that his brother John was dead. From a window he discovered that the house was on fire, which no doubt quickened his exertions. Descending, he found his mother near the door, faint from the blow dealt upon her head, and too weak to render him any assistance. With no little effort the colonel succeeded in removing the body of his brother out of the house, and then assisted his mother, who was seated in a chair,\* the bottom of which had already caught fire, to a place of safety; and having carried out a bed, he laid down upon it, at a little distance from the house, in a state of exhaustion. Tom, a black slave, belonging to Adam Zielie, was the first neighbor to arrive at Fisher's. He enquired of the colonel what he should do for him? Fisher could not speak, but signified by signs his desire for water. Tom ran down to the

\* This chair is preserved as a sacred relic by the De Graff family, at the Visscher house.

*Da-de-nos-ca-ra*,\* a brook running through a ravine a little distance east of the house, and filling his old hat, the only substitute for a vessel at hand, he soon returned with it; a drink of which restored the wounded patriot to consciousness and speech. His neighbor, Joseph Clement, arrived at Fisher's while the colonel lay upon the bed, and on being asked by Tom Zielie what they should do for him, unblushingly replied in Low Dutch, "*Laat de vervlukten rabble starven!*" *Let the cursed rebel die!*

Tom, who possessed a feeling heart, was not to be suaded from his Samaritan kindness, by the icy coldness of his tory neighbor, and instantly set about relieving the suffering man's condition. Uriah Bowen arrived about the time Tom returned with the water, and assisted in removing the dead and wounded farther from the burning building. Col. Fisher directed Tom to harness a span of colts, then in a pasture near, (which, as the morning was very foggy, had escaped the notice of the enemy,) before a wagon, and take him to the river at David Putman's. The colts were soon harnessed, when the bodies of the murdered brothers, and those of Col. Fisher and his mother, were put into the wagon, (the two latter upon a bed,) and it moved forward. The noise of the wagon was heard by the girls, who came from their concealment to learn the fate of the family, and join the mournful groupe. When the wagon arrived near the bank of the river, several tories were present, who refused to assist in carrying the Fishers down the bank to a canoe, whereupon Tom took the colts by their heads, and led them down the bank; and what was then considered remarkable, they went as steadily as old horses, although never before harnessed. The family were taken into a boat and carried across the river to Ephraim Wemple's, where every attention was paid them. When a person is scalped, the skin falls upon the face so as to disfigure the countenance; but on its being drawn up on the crown of the head, the face resumes its natural look; such was the case with Col. Fisher, as stated by an eye witness.

\* *Da-de-nos-ca-ra* or *Da-da-nus-ga-ra*, "means literally, bearded trees, or tress with excrescences or tufts to them." (*Giles F. Yates. Esq.*) Lands adjoining this stream were originally timbered with hemlock and black ash, which originated the significant name.

Seeing the necessity of his having proper medical attention, Col. Fisher's friends on the south side of the river, sent him forward in the canoe by trusty persons, to Schenectada, where he arrived just at dark the same day of his misfortune. There he received the medical attendance of Doctors Mead of that place, Stringer, of Albany, and two Surgeons, belonging to the U. S. army. His case was for some time a critical one, and he did not recover as was anticipated; but on turning him over, the reason why he did not was obvious. The wound inflicted by the scalping knife in the back of the neck, had escaped the observation of his attendants, and the flies getting into it, and depositing their larva, had rendered it an offensive sore, but on its being properly dressed, the patient recovered rapidly. At the time Col. Fisher received his wounds, Nicholas Quackenboss previously mentioned, happened to be at Albany, purchasing fish and other necessities, and on learning that his neighbor was at Schenectada, called, on his way home, to see him. On enquiring of Fisher how he did, the latter, placing his hand on his wounded head, replied in Dutch, "*Well, Nicholas, you've had your wish!*" The reader must not suppose, from what took place between Fisher and Quackenboss, at the two interviews named, that the former at the time of removing his family, was in possession of any intelligence of the enemy unknown to his neighbors. It was then notorious in the valley that an invasion was to be apprehended.

Several attempts were made to capture Col. Fisher during the war, which proved abortive. After he recovered, he gave the faithful negro\* who had treated him so kindly when suffering under the wounds of the enemy, a valuable horse. Gov. George Clinton, as a partial reward for his sufferings and losses in the war, appointed Col. Fisher a brigadier general; but refusing to equip himself, his commission, which was dated February 6, 1787, was succeeded on the 7th of March following, by his ap-

\* Tom afterwards lived in Schoharie county, where he was much respected for his industrious habits, and where at a good old age he died. After his removal to Schoharie, he usually paid Col. Fisher a visit every year, when he received substantial evidence of that patriot's gratitude.



pointment of first judge of the Montgomery county common pleas.

After the war was over, a party of Indians on their way to Albany halted a day or two at Caughnawaga, among whom was the one who had tomahawked and scalped Col. Fisher, in 1780, leaving him for dead. This Indian could not credit the fact of his being still alive, as he said he had himself *cut his throat*; and was desirous of having ocular demonstration of his existence, and possibly would have been gratified by the family, but information having reached the ears of the colonel that his tormentor was in the valley, a spirit of revenge fired his breast, and himself and John Stoner, then living with him, who, in the murder of his father, had some reason for not kindly greeting those sons of the forest; having prepared several loaded guns, the friends of the family very properly warned the Indian and his fellows, not to pass the house within rifle shot distance; which hint was duly taken, and serious consequences thus avoided. Judge Fisher—a living monument of savage warfare—was an active and useful citizen of the Mohawk valley for many years, and died of a complaint in the head—caused, as was supposed, by the loss of his scalp, on the 9th day of June, 1809. His widow, whose maiden name was Gazena De Graff, died in 1815.

Some years after the Revolution, Judge Fisher, or Visscher, as it is now written by several of the family, to whom the homestead reverted on the death of his brothers, erected a substantial brick dwelling over the ashes of his birth place, where he spent the evening of his days amid, the associations of youthful pleasure and manly suffering. This desirable farm residence, a view of which is shown in the plate opposite, is pleasantly situated on a rise of ground in the town of Mohawk, several miles east of Fonda, Montgomery county. It is given the Indian name of the adjoining creek, in the hope of preserving that name. Between the house and the river, which it fronts, may be seen the Mohawk turnpike, and the track of the Utica and Schenectada railroad. The place is now owned and occupied by Mr. De Graff, who married a grand-daughter of its former patriotic proprietor.







DADENOSCARA PLACE, IN THE DUE VISSCHER MANSION

From this digression, let us return to the war-path of the enemy. They captured three negroes and a wench belonging to the Fisher family ; burnt Fisher's barn, and in it, as supposed, their own dead, killed by the brothers ; from whence they proceeded to the dwelling of Barney Wemple, a little farther up the river—which was rifled and burnt with the out-buildings attached. Wemple had sent a slave, before daylight, to catch horses, who, hearing the firing, and discovering the light of the burning buildings down the valley, ran to the house and gave the appalling intelligence that a sleepless foe was near. Thus alarmed, the family fled, almost naked, into a small swamp, just in time to escape the tomahawk. Wemple erected a dwelling on the site of his former one, soon after it was burnt, which shared a similar fate during Johnson's invasion of the valley the following October. In their course up the river, the enemy also burnt the out-buildings of Peter Conyne, the dwelling of John Wemple, and possibly one or two others. Arriving at Caughnawaga, the destruction of property was renewed. Douw Fonda, who removed from Schenectada and settled at that place, about the year 1751, (the same year in which Harman Fisher settled below,) was an aged widower, and resided, at the time of which I am writing, with a few domestics, in a large stone dwelling with wings, which stood on the flats between the present turnpike and the river, a few rods east of the road now leading to the bridge. It had been the intention of the citizens to fortify this dwelling, and it was partially surrounded by strong pickets. Fonda's three sons, John,\* Jelles, and Adam, also good whigs, were living in the neighborhood.

\* At the commencement of hostilities, he had some difficulty with Alexander White, sheriff of Tryon county, about their hogs and cattle breaking in upon each others premises, which resulted in a quarrel, in which White called Fonda a d—d rebel ; and the latter, provoked to anger, did not scruple to give his majesty's peace officer a severe caning: the result was, White took Fonda to the Johnstown jail. The citizens in a mob soon after proceeded to the jail and liberated Fonda, and attempted to secure the person of the sheriff, then at the village inn kept by Mattice. Armed with a double-barreled gun, White fired several times on the assailants from an upper window, and then secreted himself in a chimney, where he remained while the patriot party, who had forced an entrance, were in the house. Soon after, sheriff White,

Jelles Fonda\* resided a short distance below the Caughnawaga church, owning a large dwelling and store, which stood where C. Hempsted now resides. At the time of this invasion, he was absent on public business. About a week previous, he sent part of his family and effects in a bateau to Schenectada, to which place they were accompanied by the wife and children of John Fonda. The wife of Major Fonda and her son Douw, were at home, however, on that morning. Hearing the firing at Fisher's, and discovering the light of the burning buildings below, Mrs. Fonda and her son fled to the river near, where there was a ferry. Remaining in the ferry-boat, she sent Douw to get two horses, and being gone some time, her fears were excited lest he had been captured. As her apprehensions for her son's safety increased, she called him repeatedly by name. He returned with the horses and they began to cross the river, but had hardly reached its centre, when several of the enemy, attracted to the spot by her voice, arrived on the bank they had left. A volley of balls passed over the boat without injuring its inmates, and leaving it upon the south shore, they mounted their horses, and directed their course towards Schenectada, where they safely arrived in due time.

Adam Fonda, at the time of Johnson's invasion, resided near the Cayadutta creek, where Douw Fonda now does. Arriving at Adam Fonda's, the enemy made him a prisoner, and fired his dwelling. Margaret, (Peggy, as she was called,) the widow of Barney Wemple, lived near Fonda, and where Mina Wemple now

whose official authority was now at an end, was smuggled from Johnstown in a large chest by his political friends; and his wife shortly after followed his fortunes to Canada. The dwelling vacated by White, was owned at his death by Sir Wm. Johnson, and stood on the present site of the Montgomery county court house in Fonda: this dwelling was occupied by John Fonda afterwards.—*Mrs. Evert Yates, daughter of John Fonda.*

\* Mr. Fonda had seen service in the French war under Sir Wm. Johnson, had for many years been extensively engaged in merchandising, was a captain and afterwards major of militia in the Revolution; and was much of that period in the commissary department. He was a man of wealth, influence and respectability, and at the beginning of colonial difficulties, had the most flattering inducements offered him to side with royalty, which he promptly rejected.

lives, at which place she then kept a public house. The enemy making her son, Mina, a prisoner, locked her up in her own dwelling and set it on fire. From an upper window, she made the valley echo to her cries of *murder* and *help*, which brought some one to her relief. Her voice arrested the attention of John Fonda, who sent one of his slaves round the knoll which formerly stood west of the Fonda Hotel, to learn the cause of alarm; but hardly had the slave returned, before the enemy's advance from both parties was there also, making Fonda a prisoner, and burning his dwelling.

The eastern party, on arriving at the dwelling of Maj. Fonda, plundered and set it on fire. There were then few goods in his store; but his dwelling contained some rare furniture for that period, among which was a musical clock, that at certain hours performed three several tunes. The Indians would have saved this house for the great respect they had for its owner, but their more than savage allies, the tories, insisted on its destruction. As the devouring element was consuming the dwelling, the clock began to perform, and the Indians, in numbers, gathered round in mute astonishment, to listen to its melody. They supposed it the voice of a *spirit*, which they may have thought was pleased with them for the manner in which they were serving *tyranny*. Of the plunder made at this dwelling, was a large circular mirror, which a citizen in concealment saw, first in the hands of a squaw, but it being a source of envy it soon passed into the hands of a stout Indian—not however without a severe struggle on her part. The Indians were extravagantly fond of mirrors, and it is not unlikely this costly one was broken in pieces and divided between them. Among the furniture destroyed in the house, was a marble table on which stood the statue of an Indian, whose head rested on a pivot, which, from the slightest motion was continually—

“Niding, nodding, and nid, nid nodding.”

Neither the parsonage, which stood a little north of the present one, or the church at Caughnawaga, were harmed. Dr. Romeyn, then its pastor, was from home. Mrs. Romeyn, as she was flee-



ing up the hill north of her house with her family, carrying two children, was seen by the Indians who laughed heartily at the ludicrous figure she presented, without offering to molest her, unless possibly by an extra whoop.

When the alarm first reached the family of Douw Fonda, Penelope Grant, a Scotch girl living with him, to whom the old gentleman was much attached, urged him to accompany her to the hill whither the Romeyn family were fleeing; but the old patriot had become childish, and seizing his gun he exclaimed—“*Penelope, do you stay here with me—I will fight for you to the last drop of blood!*” Finding persuasion of no avail, she left him to his fate, which was indeed a lamentable one; for soon the enemy arrived, and he was led out by a Mohawk Indian, known as *One Armed Peter* (he having lost an arm) toward the bank of the river, where he was tomahawked and scalped. As he was led from the house, he was observed by John Hansen, a prisoner, to have some kind of a book and a cane in his hand. His murderer had often partaken of his hospitality, having lived for many years in his neighborhood. When afterwards reproved for this murder, he replied that as it was the intention of the enemy to kill him, *he thought he might as well get the bounty for his scalp as any one else!* Mr. Fonda had long been a warm personal friend of Sir William Johnson, and it is said that Sir John much regretted his death, and censured the murderer. This Indian, Peter, was the murderer of Capt. Hansen, on the same morning. With the plunder made at Douw Fonda’s were four male slaves and one female, who were all taken to Canada. Several other slaves were of the plunder made in the neighborhood, and doubtless became incorporated with the Canada Indians.\*

An incident of no little interest is related by an eye witness from the hill, as having occurred in this vicinity on the morning

\* The preceding facts relating to this invasion were obtained from *Daniel Visscher and John Fisher, sons of Col. Fr. Fisher; Mrs. Margaret Putman, a sister of Col. Fisher; Angelica, daughter of Capt. Henry Hansen, and widow of John Fonda; Catharine, daughter of John Fonda, late the wife of Evert Yates; Peter, a son of Cornelius Putman; Volkert Voorhees; Cornelius, son of Barney Wemple; David, son of Adam Zielie; and John S. Quackenboss.*

of this invasion. A little distance in advance of the enemy, a man was seen in a wagon which contained several barrels, urging his horses forward. Despairing of making his escape with the wagon, he abandoned it, and mounting one of his horses he drove to the river, into which they plunged and swam across with him in safety. On reaching the wagon, the barrels were soon found to contain *rum*, which had been destined to one of the frontier forts. Knocking in the head of a cask, the Indians were beginning to drink and gather round with shouts of merriment, when a British officer dressed in green came up, and with a tomahawk hacked the barrels in pieces, causing the liquor to run upon the ground, to the mortification of his tawny associates, who dispersed with evident displeasure.—*Mrs. Penelope Forbes. Her maiden name was Grant.*

The enemy, led by Col. Johnson in person, on their way to Caughnawaga, plundered and burned the dwellings of James Davis, one Van Brochlin and Sampson Sammons.—*Mrs. John Fonda.* Sammons with his sons, Jacob, Frederick and Thomas, were captured, but himself and youngest son, Thomas, were set at liberty: the other two were carried to Canada. For an account of their sufferings, see *Life of Brant*.

Cornelius Smith, who lived two miles west of Major Fonda, on the morning of Johnson's invasion, was going to mill,\* and called just after daylight at Johannes Veeder's. The latter was then at Schenectada, but his son, Simon, (afterwards a judge of Montgomery county,) who resided with him, was at home, and had arisen. On his way to Veeder's, Smith had discovered the smoke of the Sammons dwelling, but being unable to account for it, continued his journey, and was captured just below. Mr. Veeder, who had accompanied Smith toward the road from hearing the discharge of musketry down the valley, soon after his neighbor was out of sight, beheld to his surprise a party of Indians approaching him from that direction; upon which he ran to his house,

\* A small grist mill, which stood near the present site of the district school house in Fonda. This mill was inclosed by palisades in the latter part of the war, to serve the purposes of a fort.

(which stood a little distance above the present village of Fonda, where a namesake now resides,) pursued by them. He alarmed his family, which consisted of Gilbert Van Deusen, Henry Vrooman, a lame man, and James Terwilleger, a German; and several women and slaves. The three men snatched each a gun and fled from a back door, Vrooman with his boots in his hand; and as Veeder, minus a hat, was following them with a gun in each hand, the enemy opened the front door. They leveled their guns but did not fire, supposing, possibly, that he would be intimidated and surrender himself a prisoner. As Veeder left the house, the women fled down cellar for safety. The fugitives had to pass a board fence a few rods from the house, and as Veeder was leaping it, several of the enemy fired on him, three of their balls passing through the board beneath him. One of his comrades drew up to return the fire, but Veeder, fearing it might endanger the safety of the women, would not permit him to. The house was then plundered, and after removing the women from the cellar, an act, I suppose, of an Indian acquaintance, the house was fired, and with it several out buildings. The dwellings of Abraham Veeder, Col. Volkert Veeder, that of Smith already named, and those of two of the Vroomans, situated above, also shared a similar fate, and became a heap of ruins.—*Volkert, a son of Simon Veeder.*

At this period, George Eacker resided where Jacob F. Dockstader now does, just below the Nose. Having discovered the fire of the burning buildings down the valley, he sent his family into the woods on the adjoining mountain, but remained himself to secure some of his effects. While thus busily engaged, several of the enemy arrived and made him prisoner. As they began to plunder his house, they sent him into the cellar to procure them food. On entering it, he discovered an outside door ajar; passing which, he fled for the woods. As they thought his stay protracted, the Indians entered the cellar, and had the mortification to see their late prisoner climbing the hill, beyond the reach of their guns. Finding his family, he led them to a place of greater security in the forest, where they remained until the present danger was past, and their buildings reduced to ashes.—*David Eacker, first judge of Montgomery county at his death.*

The enemy proceeded at this time as far west as the Nose, destroying a new dwelling, ashery, &c., just then erected by Major Jelles Fonda.—*Mrs. John Fonda.*

When Sir John Johnson removed from Johnstown to Canada, a faithful slave owned by him, buried, after he had left, his most valuable papers and a large quantity of silver coin, in an iron chest, in the garden, at Johnson Hall. Among the confiscated property of Sir John sold at auction, was this very slave. He was bought by Col. Volkert Veeder, and no persuasion could induce him to reveal any secrets of his former master. This slave was recovered by Johnson on the morning of his invasion; and returning to the Hall with his first owner, he disinterred the iron chest, and the contents were obtained. Some of the papers, from having been several years in the ground, were almost destroyed. This slave, although well treated by Col. Veeder, was glad of an opportunity to join Col. Johnson, (who had made him a confidant,) and accompany him to Canada.—*Mrs. Fonda.*

Several boys were captured along the river, who were liberated at Johnson Hall, and returned home, among whom were James Romeyn, and Mina Wemple. The latter, hearing the proposition made by Sir John, to allow the boys to return, who was rather larger than any of the others, stepped in among them saying, *me too! me too!* and was finally permitted to accompany them off; and returned to the ashes of her inn, to console his mother. Thomas Sammons, Abraham Veeder, and John Fonda, (and possibly some others) were also permitted, on certain conditions, to return home; the latter, and his brother Adam, casting lots to see which should be retained a prisoner. The captives thus liberated, were given a *pass*, by Col. Johnson, lest they might meet some of the enemy, and be retaken. They had not proceeded far when Veeder, (who was a brother of Col. Volkert Veeder,) halted, to read his pass. "Well," said his companion, Fonda, in Low Dutch, "you may stop here to read your pass, if you choose, but I prefer reading mine when out of danger of them red devils of Sir John's."—*Evert Yates.*

Colonels Harper and Volkert Veeder, collected, as speedily as

possible, the scattered militia of Tryon county, to pursue the invaders, but being too weak successfully to give them battle, they were permitted, almost unmolested, to escape with their booty to Canada. John J. Hanson, captured at Tribes' Hill, after journeying with the enemy two days, effected his escape, and arrived half-starved, at the dwelling of a German, living back of Stone Arabia, who supplied him with food, and he reached Fort Hunter in safety.—*Mrs. Evert Yates.*



## CHAPTER XII.

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The following facts were obtained in 1837, from *Henry Hynds*, a son of *William Hynds*, who was one of the few whigs living in New Dorlach, in the Revolution. On the evening of July 4th, 1780, a party of the enemy, consisting of *seven Indians, a squaw, and one white man*, Capt. Adam Crysler, arrived in the settlement and put up, as was afterwards learned, at the house of Michael Merckley. The ostensible object of their visit was, to capture Bastian France, as a son of the latter informed the author; but as he chanced to be from home, at the suggestion of the Merckley family, they concluded to seize upon some other whigs in the vicinity. As there was but little intercourse among distant neighbors in that busy season of the year, and William Hynds was living in quite a retired place, it was suggested to Crysler, that if this family was carried into captivity, and the house *not burned*, they might be gone a week, and no one else know of their absence. The suggestion was received with favor, and the next day, as the family of Hynds were at dinner, they were surprised, and taken prisoners. As the captors approached the dwelling, they fired a gun in at an open door, to intimidate the family; and entering secured Mr. Hynds, his wife, daughters Catharine, and Mary, who were older than my informant, and four children, younger, Elizabeth, William, Lana, and an infant. The Indians then plundered the house of whatever they desired to take along. Henry was compelled to catch four horses belonging to his father, obedience to which command several of the party stood with ready rifles to enforce, and prevent his escape. Upon the backs of three horses was placed the plunder made in the dwelling; and upon the fourth, on a man's saddle, Mrs. Hynds, with several of her youngest children, was permitted to ride. The party moved for-

ward about 2 o'clock, and traveled that afternoon to Lake Utsay-antho, and encamped near the Champion place, seven miles distant from the dwelling of Hynds. The second night they encamped in an orchard near Collier's. Among the plunder taken from the dwelling of Hynds, was a quantity of ham and pork, which the Indians ate; giving the prisoners flour, which they made into pudding.

Mr. Hynds was bound nights, and a rope laid across his body, each end of which was tied to an Indian. The party were three weeks going to Niagara; and killed on the route one deer, several muskrats, otters, &c., which served for food. In lieu of salt, they used ashes, and the family continued well until they reached Niagara. The large children went barefooted nearly all the way to Canada. Soon after they started, the squaw took from Henry, his shoes, which, as she could not wear them, she threw away. While journeying, they built fires nights, around which they slept upon the ground. Soup was their usual supper. On passing Indian villages, the prisoners were much abused by squaws and children; and on one occasion, Mr. Hynds was knocked down by a blow upon the head with an empty bottle.

Soon after their arrival at Niagara, Mr. Hynds and all his family, except Henry, took the fever and ague, of which William, a promising lad, died. The prisoners were at Niagara when the troops under Sir John Johnson, destined to ravish the Schoharie and Mohawk valleys, set out on their journey. The Tories from Schoharie and New Dorlach, who accompanied the army, often boasted to the prisoners, that Albany would soon be taken by the British, when themselves were to possess certain choice sections of the Schoharie flats. Mary, then fourteen or fifteen years of age, was separated from the rest of the family at Niagara, and taken to supply a vacancy in an Indian family, occasioned by the death of one of its members. Some time in the fall, the prisoners were removed to Buck's Island, where Elizabeth, the child next older than William, also died. From the Island, they were removed to Montreal, where Lana, the youngest child but one, died. Mrs. Hynds, whose constitution was undermined by the accumulating

load of her mental and bodily sufferings, with her infant child soon after followed her other three children to the grave; reducing the family from nine to four. In the winter following his capture, Henry had a severe attack of fever and ague, and was removed from the guard-house to the hospital; where he was properly treated and soon recovered.

About two years and a half after their capture, Mr. Hynds, his son Henry, and daughter Catharine, with nearly three hundred other prisoners, returned home by the usual route down the Hudson river. Mary was detained nearly *three years longer* in Canada, but finally returned home. As was surmised, the whigs of New Dorlach knew nothing of the capture of Mr. Hynds and his family until they had been gone three or four days.

The greater part of the month of July, 1780, Seth's Henry, and a few other Indians, were secreted about the Schoharie settlements, in the hope of killing or surprising some of the principal settlers, as he stated after the war.

One dark night, this Indian, says *Josias E. Vrooman*, visited the upper fort, in the hope of surprising a sentinel. He commenced climbing up at one of the sentry-boxes, with a spear in his hand, but before he was within reach of the sentinel, who chanced on that night to be Frederick Quant, the latter heard his approach, and gave the usual challenge. The Indian then dropped down upon the ground, and threw himself under one of the farm waggon which usually clustered around the outside of the pickets. A ball from the rifle of Quant, fired in the direction he ran, entered a waggon near his head, but the Indian made his escape.

For the following particulars the author is indebted to the manuscript of *Judge Hager*, to *Col. J. W. Bouck*, and the memory of *Dick*, a former slave belonging to the Bouck family.

About the 25th of July, William Bouck, an elderly man, the one mentioned as the first white male child born in Schoharie, went from the upper fort to his dwelling, situated where Wilhelmus Bouck now resides, (nearly two miles distant from said fort,) to secure his crops, taking with him a girl named Nancy Lattimore, a female slave, and her three children, two sons and a daugh-

ter. As the family were making preparations in the evening to retire to rest, Seth's Henry and three other Indians entered the house and captured them, securing the little plunder it chanced to contain. The leader was disappointed in not finding either of Mr. Bouck's three sons at home.

Dick Bouck, the youngest of the slaves, as the enemy entered the house, sprang behind a door which stood open, and escaped their notice. The other prisoners were taken out, and as they were about to start on their journey, Master Dick, *afraid of being left alone in the dark*, made some noise on purpose to attract their attention, and one of the Indians re-entered the house and "hustled him out." Speaking of his capture, Dick said, "*I made a noise, like a tam fool, and de Ingens took me dar prisoner.*" The party then set forward, and the captor of Dick (then eight years old) took him upon his back, and carried him as far as the residence of the late Gen. Patchin, a distance of seven or eight miles, where they encamped. The enemy expected to be pursued the following day, when it would undoubtedly become known that Mr. Bouck had been captured, and before daylight the march was resumed. After sunrise, Dick had to travel on foot with the other prisoners; and on the following night encamped at Harpersfield. At this place lived a Scotch tory, named Hugh Rose, who made jonny-cake for the Indians, which the latter shared with their prisoners. "*Dis*, said Dick, "*was de fus food de gabe us fore we lef home.*" While on their way from the Patchin place to Harpersfield, the party, for obvious reasons, avoided the beaten road, but Dick, who said "*de bushes hurt him pare feet*," embraced repeated opportunities to steal into it, and sometimes traveled several rods in it, before his violation of their commands was observed. He often was cunning enough to leave the road just in time to avoid detection, but repeatedly he was caught in "the forbidden path," when he was put upon a new trail, with a threat or a slap. Rose furnished provisions for the enemy to subsist on a part of the way to Canada, and they left his house about 8 o'clock the next morning.



William Bouck, Jr. was out on a scout from the upper fort at the time his father's family was captured. The scout consisted of Bouck, John Haggidorn, Bartholomew C. Vrooman, (the first husband of Mrs. Van Slyck before mentioned,) and Bartholomew Haggidorn. They were sent on the errand which had led so many scouts in that direction—to anticipate, if possible, any hostile movement of the enemy. The Indians, with their prisoners, had been gone but a very short time from the house of Rose, before the scout named entered it. They enquired of Rose if there were any Indians in that vicinity. "Yes," he replied, "the woods are full of them." They desired to know in what direction they were from his house, when, instead of sending them from, he directed them towards the enemy. The footsteps of the scout arrested the attention of the Indians, who halted, leveled their rifles, and waited the approach of the former. The Indians were on a rise of ground, and as Bouck looked up he saw Nancy, waving her bonnet, with fear depicted in her countenance, which signal he rightly conjectured was intended to warn him of danger, and direct his flight in another course. He instantly divined the reason of her being there, and apprising his comrades of their peril, he turned and fled in an opposite direction. At that instant the Indians fired, and John Haggidorn was wounded in the hip, and a ball passed through the cravat of Bouck, which was tied around his neck. Haggidorn fell, but instantly sprang up and followed his companions. Had they known that there were but four of the enemy, they would no doubt have turned upon them and rescued the prisoners. The scout returned to the house of Rose, and as Haggidorn was too severely wounded to proceed, he was left by his friends, who assured the tory that if harm befel their wounded friend, or he was not well taken care of, his own life should be the forfeit.

As was anticipated, Bouck was missing in the morning, and as soon as information of the fact reached the fort, Capt. Hager despatched about twenty men, under the command of Lieutenants Ephraim Vrooman and Joseph Harper, in pursuit of the captors. They rightly conjectured the enemy would take the usual route to-



wards Harpersfield, and after proceeding in uncertainty until they discovered the track of Dick in the path, which they at once supposed left the impression of his *heel*, they pushed forward rapidly. The scout had gone but a few miles towards the fort, when they fortunately fell in with the pursuing party, and instantly joined it. After arriving at the place where Haggidorn had been wounded, they soon struck upon the trail of the enemy, which ascended the high grounds near. The Indians had gone but a mile or two beyond where the scout saw them, and halted to rest upon a narrow plain near the top of the mountain, where three of them remained with the prisoners, while Seth's Henry ascended to the summit, which afforded a most extended prospect, to reconnoitre. The Indians left with the prisoners, feeling themselves secure, had laid down their packs, and were in the act of mending their mocasons, as the Americans were cautiously winding their way up the acclivity.

Seth's Henry, from his elevated position, completely overlooked his approaching foes, and feeling satisfied that they were now safe, he had just returned to his companions and told them they were out of danger from pursuit, as the Americans gained a view of them within rifle-shot distance. The lives of the prisoners being endangered, several of whom were nearest the Americans, prevented the instant discharge of a volley of balls, but as Leek had a fair aim upon an Indian, he snapped and his rifle unfortunately missed fire. Hearing the click of this lock, the Indians instantly sprang to their feet, seized their weapons, and leaving their prisoners and packs, giving a whoop and exclaiming *Yankees*, fled barefooted down the mountain in an opposite direction. The prisoners were then unbound, grateful for so unexpected a deliverance, and the party descended the hill, and proceeded to the dwelling of Rose. A kind of litter was there prepared, on which Haggidorn was carried by his friends to the fort, where, under proper treatment, he recovered.

If Seth's Henry, was foiled in taking Mr. Bouck and his family to Canada, it did not discourage him from making other attempts to surprise some of the Schoharie citizens. Familiar as he was

with every hill, dale, ravine, and cluster of shrubbery along the river, he was enabled often to approach the very dwellings of the settlers, without being observed.

He told Mrs. Van Slyck, after the war, that on Tuesday, one week before the destruction of Vrooman's Land, and about a week after his capture of William Bouck, himself and two other Indians, one of whom was called William, his sister's son, lay concealed near a spring, in an angle of a fence, by the thick shade of a sassafras tree, not far from her father's dwelling, when she with a pail went to the spring for water—that William wanted to shoot her, but he would not let him.

*Mrs. Van Slyck stated*, that on the day referred to, her father, Samuel Vrooman, was at work, with several others, in a field of grain not far from his house, where a small party of riflemen from the fort were in attendance to guard them; and that she was at home alone to prepare their dinner. When she had it about ready, she went with a pail to the spring mentioned for water. As she approached it she saw the mocasoned track of an Indian, which she at once recognized as such, but recently made in the soft earth near it. In an instant she was seized with the most lively apprehension; and the first thought—as she felt her hair move on her head—was, that she would turn and run; but this would betray to the enemy her knowledge of their supposed proximity; whereas, if she did not pretend to notice the track, if her scalp was not what the foe sought, she would doubtless escape. She therefore walked boldly up to the spring, dipped her pail, with little caution about roiling the water, and walked back to the house. She expected, at every step, to hear the crack of a rifle discharged at herself, and passing several stumps on the way, this, and this, thought she, will shield me for the moment. On arriving at the house, she set down her pail, and ran to the field (leaving several gates open) to tell her friends what she had seen at the spring. The soldiers visited it and saw the Indian foot-marks, but the makers, observing their approach, had fled.

Seth's Henry pretended, after the war, that nothing but his friendship for her saved informant's life at the spring, but the fear

of pursuit from the riflemen near, was, perhaps, the real cause of her escape. William, who leveled his rifle at her, and was prevented firing by the caution of his leader, had, for many years, held a grudge against her. Being often at her father's house before the war, she one day accused him of stealing geese eggs, which he resented, although perhaps guilty, drew his knife and struck a blow at her, the blade of which entered the right thigh, leaving an indellible evidence of his resentment.

The same day that those Indians were concealed at Vrooman's spring, they were discovered elsewhere by some person in the settlement. Seth's Henry told Mrs. Van Slyck, that the night preceding his visit to the spring, he, with his companions, had entered the kitchen of Ephraim Vrooman's dwelling, and finding a kettle of supawn, made use of it for their suppers. Two Germans lodged in the house that night; a fact unknown to the Indians, as was to the former the nocturnal visit of the latter. After procuring food at this house, they went to the barn of Samuel Vrooman, where they tarried over night. Thus were an armed and savage foe often prowling about the very dwellings of the frontier settlers of New York, without their knowledge.

Seth's Henry, at his interview, also stated to Mrs. Van Slyck, that some time in the summer of 1780, *seven* Indians (of which number, was the Schoharie Indian, William,) went into the vicinity of Catskill to capture prisoners. That they visited a small settlement where the whites were from home, and soon succeeded in capturing *seven* lusty negroes. The latter generally went so willingly into captivity that they were seldom bound in the daytime. After traveling some distance, the party halted upon the bank of a spring to rest: when the Indians, leaving their guns behind them, descended to drink. The favorable moment was seized by the prisoners to liberate themselves, and snatching up the guns, they fired upon their captors, four of whom were killed: the other three fled, and William was the only one who recovered his trusty rifle. The negroes, with the six guns, returned home in due time, without further molestation.

Capt. Richtmyer, who resided near the Middle fort, was told

by Joseph Ecker, (a tory who returned to Schoharie after the war,) that on a certain day, four tories, a Shafer, a Winne, a Miller, and another person he would not name, (supposed by Captain R. to have been Ecker himself,) were secreted all day near his meadow, not far from the present site of the county poor house, in the hope of making him their prisoner. The grass was cut, and they expected the captain would be there to cure it, but fortunately Col. Zielie ordered him to superintend the making of cartridges at the fort, and next day several soldiers were sent from the fort to guard the workmen. Thus was the design of the enemy frustrated. Four places of concealment were made and occupied by the tories near the field, by setting up green twigs, which were afterwards noticed by the citizens.—*George, a son of Capt. Richtmyer.*

On the second and third days of August, 1780, the settlements in and around Canajoharie were laid waste by a body of Indians under Brant. Sixteen of the inhabitants were killed, between fifty and sixty made prisoners; over one hundred buildings burnt, and a large amount of property destroyed. This happened at a time when the Tryon county militia were mostly drawn off to Fort Schuyler. See letter of Col. Clyde to Gov. George Clinton, dated, "Canajoharie, August 6th, 1780;" first published in the *Annals of Tryon County*.

At this time a party of the enemy appeared in the vicinity of Fort Dayton. Two Indians had the temerity to approach a barn, in which two men were threshing, on whom they fired. The flail-stick in the hands of one was nearly severed by a bullet, but the young farmers escaped to the fort. It was well garrisoned, and a party of Americans being then mounted, pursued and killed both the Indians. The enemy succeeded, however, in capturing the wife of Jacob Shoemaker, and her son, a lad some ten years old, who were in a field picking green peas. On their arrival in Canada, Sir John Johnson, paid seven dollars to ransom the mother, who, leaving her son in captivity, arrived at Albany some time after, from whence she was carried to Schenectada in a wagon, by Isaac Covenhoven, and from thence she accompanied



one Walradt, a former neighbor to Herkimer.—*Isaac Covenhoven*, who was at Fort Dayton during the invasion.

It is probable the Schoharie settlers had been notified of the misfortunes of their friends in the Mohawk Valley, and were anxious to guard against surprise. The Schoharie forts were feebly garrisoned at the time, but small parties of soldiers were constantly engaged during the day, to guard the more exposed inhabitants while harvesting an unusual growth of wheat.

Early on the morning of the 9th of the same month, a scout, consisting of Coonradt Winne, Leek, and Hoever, was sent by Capt. Hager, from the Upper fort to reconnoitre in the western part of the present town of Fulton. The scout was instructed to return immediately to the fort *without firing*, if they saw any of the enemy, and were not themselves discovered. In that part of Fulton, now called Byrnville, or Sap Bush Hollow, some five or six miles distant from the Upper fort; the scout seated themselves upon a fallen tree, near the present residence of Edwin M. Dexter, to eat their breakfast; and while eating, a white man, painted as an Indian, made his appearance within some fifty yards of them. Stooping down as nature prompted, he became so good a mark, that Leek, who was a dead shot, not seeing any one else, could not resist the temptation to fire, and levelling his rifle, the tory was instantly weltering in his gore. As surgical instruments were afterwards found upon his person, he was supposed to have been a surgeon, in the employ of Brant. A small stream of water near, which took its name from the killing of this man, whose carcass rotted by it, has been called Dead Man's creek, ever since.

Leek had not had time to reload his piece, before the enemy appeared in sight. The scout fled, hotly pursued by a party of Indians, who passed their dying comrade without halting. Hoever had to drop his knapsack, containing some valuable articles, to outrun his pursuers, which he afterwards recovered, the enemy supposing it contained nothing more than a soldier's luncheon. They were so closely followed that they were separated, Leek flying towards the fort, while Hoever and Winne were driven into the woods, in an opposite direction. The two latter afterwards



saw, from a place of concealment near the Schoharie, in the present town of Blenheim, their foes pass up the river with their prisoners and plunder. Leek reached the fort in safety, after a race of nine or ten miles, but not enough in advance of his pursuers, to have a seasonable alarm given to warn the citizens of impending danger. The single discharge of a cannon was the usual signal; if the discharge was repeated, it was considered hazardous to approach the fort, while a third successive discharge served to assure the citizen that he could not possibly reach the fort, without encountering the enemy.

The invaders, consisting of *seventy-three* Indians, almost naked, and *five* Tories—Benjamin Beacraft, Frederick Sager, Walter Allet, one Thompson, and a mulatto, commanded by Capt. Brant, approached Vrooman's Land in the vicinity of the Upper fort, about ten o'clock in the morning. They entered the valley on the west side of the river, above the Onistagrawa in three places; one party coming down from the mountain near the present residence of Charles Watson: another near that of Jacob Haines, then the residence of Capt. Tunis Vrooman; and the third near the dwelling of Harmanus Vrooman, at that time the residence of Col. Peter Vrooman, who chanced to be with his family, in the Middle fort.

Capt. Hager, had gone on the morning of that day, to his farm, attended by a small guard, to draw in some hay nearly seven miles distant from the Upper fort, the command of which then devolved on Tunis Vrooman, captain of the *associate exempts*. Although the citizens of Schoharie had huts at the several forts where they usually lodged nights, and where their clothing and most valuable effects were kept during the summer, the female part of many families were in the daily habit of visiting their dwellings to do certain kinds of work, while their husbands were engaged in securing their crops. On the morning of the day in question, Capt. Vrooman also returned home to secure wheat, accompanied by his family, his wife to do her week's washing. The command of the garrison next belonged to Ephraim Vrooman, a lieutenant under Capt. Hager, but as he went to his farm

soon after Capt. Vrooman left, it finally devolved on Lieut. William Harper, who had not a dozen men with him in the fort. The wife of Lieut. Vrooman also returned home to do her washing.\*

Capt. Vrooman, who had drawn one load of wheat to a barrack before breakfast, arose on that morning with a presentiment that some disastrous event was about to happen, which he could not drive from his mind; and he expressed his forebodings at the breakfast-table. Four rifle-men called at his house in the morning and took breakfast with him, but returned to the fort soon after, to attend the roll-call. Capt. Vrooman's family consisted of himself, wife, four sons, John, Barney, Tunis and Peter, and two slaves, a male and female. After breakfast, Capt. Vrooman and his sons drew another load of wheat to the barrack: and while it was unloading, he stopped repeatedly to look out towards the surrounding hills. The grain had not all been pitched from the wagon, before his worst fears were realized, and he beheld descending upon the flats near, a party of hostile savages. He descended from the barrack, not far from which he was tomahawked, scalped, and had his throat cut by a Schoharie Indian named John: who stood upon his shoulders while tearing off his scalp.

Many of the old Dutch dwellings in Schoharie (the outside doors of which were usually made in two parts, so that the lower half of the passage could be closed while the upper remained open,) had a kitchen detached from them: and such was that of Capt. Vrooman. His wife was washing in a narrow passage between the buildings, where she was surprised and stricken down. After the first blow from a tomahawk, she remained standing, but a second blow laid her dead at the feet of an Indian, who also scalped her. The house was then plundered and set on fire, as was the barn, barracks of grain, hay, &c.; and the three oldest boys, with the blacks, made captives. Peter, who fled on the first alarm and concealed himself in some bushes, would probably have escaped the notice of the enemy, had not one of the blacks

\* Mrs. Vrooman said to her friends as she left the fort, "This is the last morning I intend to go to my house to work." Her words were truly prophetic.—*Andrew Loucks.*

made known his place of concealment: he was then captured and taken along a short distance, but crying to return, he ran to a fence, to which he was pursued by the tory Beacraft, who caught him, and placing his legs between his own, bent him back and cut his throat; after which, he scalped and hung him across the fence.\* Vrooman's horses were unharnessed and given to the boys to hold, as were several more, while the Indians were plundering, killing cattle and other animals, and burning buildings. While the Indians were shooting hogs in the pen, a ball went through it and lodged in the calf of John's leg; which instantly brought him to the ground: the horses then ran towards the river, and two of them were not recaptured.

The party which entered the valley at the dwelling of Colonel Vrooman, were led by Brant in person, who hoped to surprise a *rebel* colonel; but the services of that brave man were to be spared to his country. His family were also at the Middle fort.† From the dwelling of Col. Vrooman, which was a good brick tenement, and to which was applied the torch of destruction, Seth's Henry (with whom the reader has some acquaintance,) led several of the enemy to the dwelling of Lieut. Vrooman; which stood where Peter Kneiskern now lives. His family consisted of himself, wife Christina, sons Bartholomew and Josias E., and

\* Of the murder of this Vrooman boy, Beacraft took occasion repeatedly to boast, in the presence of the prisoners, while on his way to Canada; as also he did on several subsequent occasions: and yet he had the impudence to return, after the war closed, to Schoharie. His visit becoming known, a party of about a dozen whigs one evening surrounded the house he was in, near where the bridge in Blenheim now stands, and leading him from it into a grove near, they stripped and bound him to a sapling; and then inflicted *fifty lashes*, with hickory gads, upon his bare back, telling him, at intervals of *every ten*, for what particular offence they were given. He was then unbound, and given his life on condition that he would instantly leave that valley, and never more pollute its soil with his presence. He expressed his gratitude that his life was spared, left the settlement and was never afterwards heard from by the citizens of Schoharie.—*Captivity of Patchin, corroborated.*

† From what has appeared in several publications, a belief has gone abroad that Col. Vrooman was a cowardly, weak man. The impression is very erroneous, he was far otherwise, as the author has had *innumerable and repeated evidence.*

daughters Janett (four years old,) and Christina, (an infant,) two Germans, Creshiboom and Hoffman, (captured at Burgoyne's surrender,) and several slaves: the latter, however, were at work near the river and escaped. On hearing the alarm, Vrooman ran to his house, caught up his infant child and fled into the corn-field, between his dwelling and the Onistagrawa, followed by his wife leading her little daughter; said to have had long and beautiful hair for a child. He seated himself against the trunk of a large apple tree, and his wife was concealed a few rods from him in the thrifty corn. The road is now laid between the orchard and mountain, but at the period of which I speak, it passed over the flats east of the dwelling. His family would, no doubt, have remained undiscovered, had Mrs. Vrooman continued silent; but not knowing where her husband was, and becoming alarmed, she rose up and called to him in Low Dutch—"Ephraim, Ephraim, where are you: have you got the child?" The words were scarcely uttered, when a bullet from the rifle of Seth's Henry pierced her body. When struggling upon the ground, he addressed her in the Dutch tongue, as follows: "Now say—*what these Indian dogs do here?*"\* He then tomahawked and scalped her.

While Seth's Henry was killing and scalping Mrs. Vrooman, the tory Beacraft killed her little daughter with a stone, and drew off her scalp: in the mean time a powerful Indian directed by her call to her husband's place of concealment, approached him and thrust a spear at his body, which he parried, and the infant in his arms smiled. Another pass was made, was parried, and the child again smiled. At the third blow of the spear, which was also warded off, the little innocent, then only five months old, laughed aloud at the supposed sport; which awakened the sympathy of

\* This Indian had held a grudge against Mrs. Vrooman for many years. She was a Swart before marriage; at which time, and just after the ceremony was performed, she entered the kitchen of her father's dwelling, and seeing several young Indians there, she imprudently asked a by stander, in Dutch, *what do these Indian dogs do here?* He remembered the expression, and his resentment led him directly to her residence, to revenge the insult.—*Mrs. Van Slyck.*



the savage, and he made Vrooman a prisoner. His sons and the Germans named, were also captured.



### THE ONISTAGRAWA AND SCENE BENEATH IT.

Upon the top of this mountain (called by some Vrooman's Nose) which afforded a fine prospect of the valley, the enemy were often secreted to watch for exposed citizens.

John Vrooman, who dwelt where Bartholomew Vrooman now lives, was captured, as were his wife and children. His house was set on fire but put out. Adam A. Vrooman, who lived where Josias Vrooman now does, fled to the upper fort, three-fourths of a mile distant, after being twice fired upon by the enemy. He had a pistol, and when the Indians gained upon him he presented it and they would fall back, but renewed the chase when he set forward. He was pursued until protected by the fort. On his arrival he was asked how he had escaped: his answer was, "*I pulled foot.*" From that day to his death he was called *Pull Foot Vrooman*. His wife was made a prisoner.



Simon Vrooman, who resided where Adam P. Vrooman now does, was taken prisoner, as were his wife and son Jacob, a boy three years old. John Daly, aged over sixty, Thomas Meriness, and James Turner, young men, Abbey Eliza Stowits, a girl of seventeen summers, the wife of Philip Hoever, the widow of Cornelius Vrooman, and several slaves not mentioned, were also captured in Vrooman's Land, making the number of prisoners, in all, about *thirty*. The *five* persons mentioned, were all that were killed at this time. Brant might easily have taken the Upper fort, had he known how feebly it was garrisoned.

Abraham Vrooman, who happened to be in Vrooman's Land with his wagon, on which was a hay-rack, when the alarm was given, drove down through the valley and picked up several of the citizens. On arriving at the residence of Judge Swart, who lived in the lower end of the settlement, he reined up and called to Swart's wife, then at an oven a little distance from the house—"Cornelia, jump into my wagon, *the Indians are upon us!*" She ran into the house, snatched up her infant child\* from the cradle, returned, and with her husband bounded into the wagon, which started forward just before the enemy, tomahawk in hand, reached their dwelling. Vrooman had a powerful team, and did not stop to open the gates which then obstructed the highway, but drove directly against them, forcing them open. Passing under an apple tree, the rack on his wagon struck a limb, which sent it back against his head, causing the blood to flow freely. He drove to the Middle fort, which was also feebly garrisoned.

The destructives burnt at this place *nine dwellings* and the furniture they contained, with their barns and barracks, which were mostly filled with an abundant harvest. *Ninety good* horses were also driven, with their owners, into captivity. Large slices of meat were cut from the carcasses of the cattle and hogs, strewed along the valley, and hung across the backs of some of the horses, to serve as provisions for the party on their way to Canada. Among

\* The child thus seasonably rescued, is now the wife of David Swart, of Shelby, Orleans county, New York.

the plunder was a noble stud-horse, belonging to Judge Swart, and as the Indians were afraid of him, he was given young Tunis Vrooman to ride, who rode him all the way to Canada. His having the care of this horse caused the enemy to treat him kindly : and he was not compelled to run the gantlet.

Before Seth's Henry left the settlement, he placed his *war club*, which he believed was known to some of the citizens, in a conspicuous place and purposely left it. Notched upon it were the evidences, as traced by the Indians on similar weapons, of *thirty-five scalps* and *forty prisoners*. No very pleasing record, as we may suppose, for the people of Schoharie, who knew that several of their own valuable citizens helped to swell the startling, though no doubt authentic record of the deeds of this crafty warrior.

On the arrival of Leek at the upper fort, after being so hotly pursued, John Hager, then at work on his father's place, hearing the alarm gun of the fort, mounted a horse, and rode up and informed Capt. Hager that the buildings were on fire in the valley below. The hay on his wagon, which was unloading in the barn, was quickly thrown off, and the few inhabitants of that vicinity were taken into it, driven into the woods, and concealed near Keyser's kill. Henry Hager started with the wagon, when a favorite dog, that began to bark, was caught by him, and fearing it would betray the fugitives, he cut its throat with his pocket knife. After proceeding some distance from his house, having forgotten some article he intended to have taken with him, he returned and found it already occupied by the enemy, who made him their prisoner. He was nearly eighty years old ; and as he was known to the enemy to be a firm whig—his sons (one a captain) and several of his grandsons all being in the rebel army—he was treated with marked severity.

The enemy, on leaving Vrooman's Land, proceeded with their booty and prisoners directly up the river. A grist-mill, owned by Adam Crysler, a tory captain, and standing on the Lower Brakabeen creek, as called in old conveyances, which runs into the Schoharie near the residence of Benjamin Best, was sacked of the little flour it chanced to contain, and then set on fire—the tories,

with the enemy, declaring that the whigs of Vrooman's Land should not be longer benefited by said mill. Several fragments of the mill-stone used in this mill, which was an Esopus conglomerate, have been recovered from the creek since 1841, and deposited in the cabinets of geologists. The Indians, on their arrival in that part of Brakabeen, burned all of Captain Hager's buildings, and Henry Hager's barn. Henry Mattice and Adam Brown, tories, accompanied the enemy from Brakabeen of their own accord.

I have said that the families of Capt. Hager and his father were concealed at Keyser's kill. The waggon which carried them from their homes was left in one place, the horses in another, and the women and children were sheltered beneath a rock in a ravine of the mountain stream before named. After the women and children were disposed of, Capt. Hager, taking with him his brother, Lawrence Bouck, Jacob Thomas, and several others who composed the guard mentioned, proceeded from Keyser's kill with due caution, to ascertain if the Upper fort had been captured. It was nearly noon when Brant left the vicinity of that fort, and nearly night when its commandant and his men reached it. On the following day the party concealed near Keyser's kill, were conveyed to the fort.

The 10th day of August, 1780, was one of sadness and mourning for the citizens of Vrooman's Land, some of whom had lost near relatives among the slain, and all, among the captives, either relatives or valued friends; while the destruction of property to individuals was a loss, especially at that season of the year, when too late to grow sustenance for their families, to be most keenly felt and deplored. The burial of the dead took place the day after their massacre, on the farm of John Feeck, near the fort. The bodies of Capt. Vrooman, his wife and son, were deposited in one grave, and that of Mrs. Ephraim Vrooman and her daughter, in another. The remains of the former body presented a most horrid appearance. Left by her murderers between the burning buildings, her flesh was partly consumed, exposing her entrails.

When the dead body of Mrs. Ephraim Vrooman was first discovered in the corn-field, it was evident that she had partially re-

covered, and had vainly endeavored to staunch the flowing blood from the wound in her breast, first with her cap or some portion of her dress, and afterwards with earth, having dug quite a hole in the ground. This woman, as one of her sons assured the writer, had had a presentiment for nearly three years that she was to be shot. She fancied she felt a cold substance like lead passing through her body, from the back to the breast, and often the same sensation returned. She frequently expressed her fears in the family that she was to be shot, and singular as the coincidence may appear, when she was shot, the ball passed through her body where she had so long imagined it would. Nearly three years before her death, in the month of November, several of their apple trees were observed to be in blossom, which freak of nature the *superstitious* also considered an unfavorable omen. After her death those circumstances were often discussed by her relatives.

The destroyers of Vrooman's Land proceeded on the afternoon of the same day about fifteen miles, and encamped for the night. The scalps of the slain were stretched upon hoops, and dried in the presence of the relative prisoners, the oldest of whom were all bound nights. As the party were proceeding along the east shore of the Schoharie, in the afternoon of the first day, after journeying some six miles, Brant permitted the wife of John Vrooman, with her own infant, and that taken with Ephraim Vrooman, to return back to the settlement. The reader may desire to know the fate of this child, whose infant smiles had saved its father's life. Its mother being already dead, it was necessarily weaned, but at too tender an age, and three months after, it sickened and died. On the morning after the massacre, the line of march was again resumed, and when about half way from the Patchin place to Harpersfield, Brant yielded to the repeated importunities of several of his female captives, and perhaps the seasonable interference of several tory friends living near, and permitted all of them, (except Mrs. Simon Vrooman,) with several male children—nearly one half the whole number of prisoners—to return to Schoharie. Brant led the liberated captives aside nearly half a mile to a place of concealment, where he required



them to remain until night. The female prisoners, when captured, were plundered of their bonnets, neckerchiefs, beads, ear-rings, etc., which articles, of course, they did not recover. Word having been sent to Schoharie that those prisoners had been liberated, Maj. Thomas Ecker, Lieut. Harper, and Schoharie John, a friendly Indian, who lived at Middleburgh during the war, met them not far from where Mrs. Vrooman had been left the preceding afternoon, with several horses; and placing three persons on a horse, they conveyed them to the Upper fort, where they arrived just at dusk.

On the evening of the second day, the journeying party reached the Susquehanna. The prisoners were obliged to travel on foot, with the exception of Mrs. Vrooman, and the lad, Tunis Vrooman. The provisions on the journey were fresh meat after the first day, as they obtained but little flour, which was boiled into a pudding the first night. The meat taken from Schoharie was soon fly-blown, but when roasted in the coals it was feasted upon by the hungry prisoners. They progressed slowly, because they were obliged to hunt deer, and catch fish for food on their way, generally having enough to eat, such as it was. Fish they usually roasted whole in the coals, ate the flesh, and then threw the offal away. The parties that had been led by Brant and Quakock, a chief second in command, into Tryon county and the Schoharie settlements, assembled at Oquago, when several hundred of the enemy, with their prisoners, came together.

The prisoners again separated at Oquago, and proceeded by different routes to Canada. *Josias E. Vrooman*, who was among the prisoners, claimed by Seneca warriors, went with a party up the Chemung. In the Genesee valley he saw a stake planted in the ground, some five or six feet high, which was painted red and sharpened at the top, on which was resting a fleshless skull. The Indians told the prisoners it was the skull of Lieut. Boyd, who was killed in that vicinity the year before, and each of them was compelled to hold it. Whether the skull shown the Vrooman's Land prisoners was that of Lieut. Boyd, or some other prisoner who had shared a similar fate, cannot now be known; but as se-



veral teeth were found with Boyd's and Parker's bones, when removed, there can remain no doubt but that the head of Parker, which was identified by an old scar, was buried by his comrades.  
—*C. Metcalf, Esq.*

While on their journey, Lieut. Vrooman was once led out between two Indians—one armed with a tomahawk and the other a knife—to be murdered. Standing on a log which lay across a marsh or mire between the Indians, he addressed them in their own dialect, and finally made his peace with them for some trifling offence, and his life was spared. The old patriot Hager was cruelly treated all the way, and was several times struck upon the head with the flat side of a tomahawk.

I have said that John, a son of Capt. Vrooman, was wounded by the enemy while holding his father's horses. He was compelled to travel on foot, and as no attention had been paid to the wound, it was soon filled with maggots, becoming exceedingly painful. The Indians began to talk of killing him, if he failed to keep up with them. His namesake, who was his uncle, then assumed the care of him, and dressed his wound with tobacco leaves; when it gained a healthy appearance, and he was greatly relieved. While going through the Tonawanda swamp, the ball worked out and the wound soon after healed.

On arriving in the Genesee valley, Mrs. Vrooman, then quite ill, was left there. Adam Vrooman, a brother of her's, from below the Helleberg, on hearing of her captivity, paid her ransom. Some of the prisoners were twenty-two days on their journey. On arriving at the Indian settlements, they were compelled to run the gantlet; when some of them were seriously injured. A girl twelve or fourteen years old, who was among the prisoners made in the Mohawk valley, was nearly killed; and Simon Vrooman and John Daly were so badly hurt, that they both died soon after arriving at their journey's end. Vrooman's widow afterwards married a man named Markell, in Canada, and remained there. Meriness was taken to Quebec, and while there, attempted, with several other prisoners to blow up the *magazine*. The design was discovered, and the conspirators were nearly whipped to

death—two of them did die ; but Meriness finally recovered. Negro captives were seldom bound while on their way to Canada, nor were they compelled to run the gantlet. They hardly ever returned to the States to remain, generally adopting the Indian's life. A negro belonging to Isaac Vrooman, usually called Tom Vrooman, who was taken to Canada at this time, became a waiter to Sir John Johnson, and in that capacity, passed through the Schoharie and Mohawk valleys in the following October. He was, however, captured by Joseph Naylor, an American soldier, near Fort Plain, and with him an elegant horse belonging to his new master, with saddle, holsters and valise.

The greater part of the Schoharie prisoners were taken to Niagara, where they remained until November : when they proceeded in a vessel down Lake Ontario. A new ship, called the Seneca, left Niagara at the same time with the commandant of that garrison, and *three hundred and sixty* soldiers on board. Not long after they sailed, a terrible storm arose, and in the following night, the Seneca foundered and all on board were lost. The vessel contained a large quantity of provisions destined for Montreal, which were also lost. The prisoners were conveyed down the St. Lawrence in bateaus ; and some of them suffered much for the want of suitable clothing, being barefooted, although the ground was covered with snow where they encamped on shore over night. They arrived at Montreal about the first of December ; from which place, after a few weeks stay, they were removed nine miles farther, to an old French post, called South Rakela, where they were confined until the summer following, and then exchanged for other prisoners. While confined at the latter place, their provisions consisted, for the most part, of salt-beef—not always of the best kind—and oat-meal ; the latter being boiled into puddings and eaten with molasses. When an exchange was effected, most of the Schoharie prisoners, with others, were sent on board a vessel to the head of Lake Champlain, where they were landed, and from which place they returned home on foot, via. Saratoga. They arrived at Schoharie on the

30th day of August, after an absence of little more than a year. Mr. Hager was gone about eighteen months.\*

\* The particulars relating to the destruction of Vrooman's Land, and the captivity of the citizens, so minutely detailed, were obtained from *Tunis*, a son of *Capt. Tunis Vrooman*; *Josias E. and Bartholomew E.*, sons of *Lieut. Ephraim Vrooman*; *Maria*, daughter of *John Vrooman*, and afterwards the wife of *Frederick Matlice*, who were captives at the time; the manuscript of *Henry Hager*; *Mrs. Susannah Van Slyck*, daughter of *Samuel Vrooman*; *Angelica*, daughter of *Col. Peter Vrooman*, afterwards the wife of *Major Peter Vrooman*; *Lawrence Bouck and Lawrence Matlice*.

## CHAPTER XIII.

*An affair of love:* for Cupid was unchained even in perilous times. Timothy Murphy, who so providentially escaped from the enemy in Sullivan's campaign, returned to Schoharie in the summer of 1780. While on duty there in the fall and winter of 1778 and spring of 1779, Murphy became acquainted with—yes, *enamored with*—Miss Margaret, daughter of John Feeck, whose house was inclosed at the Upper fort. She was an only child, and at that period was considered, in prospective wealth, the richest girl in the Schoharie settlements.

Perhaps the reader would be gratified with a brief outline of the personal appearance of a young lady, whose artless smiles could, at the age of fifteen or sixteen, win the affections of a rough soldier, and cause him, at the earliest opportunity, to transfer the services he considered due his country, to the fertile valley in which she dwelt. The writer has conversed with not a few who were well acquainted with her, several of whom were numbered among her most intimate female friends, all of whom ascribe to her the character of a virtuous and amiable girl.

At the period of which I am writing, she had just passed "sweet seventeen," and was entering her eighteenth year; a period in the life of woman peculiarly calculated to convey and receive tender impressions. She was rather tall, and slim; possessing a genteel form, with a full bust; and features, if not handsome, at least pretty and very insinuating. Her hair was a rich auburn; her eyes a dark hazel, peering from beneath beautiful eye-lashes; her teeth clean and well set; her nose—but alas! that was large, and altogether too prominent a nasal organ to grace the visage of a

perfect beauty. Her ruby lips and peach-colored cheeks, however, contrasted charmingly with her clear white skin, besides, nature had given her, what all men like to see, a neatly turned ankle. Miss Feeck's literary acquirements, we must conclude, were limited. She had not been sent to a fashionable boarding school, and instructed in the genteel and desirable arts, to the entire exclusion, indeed *abhorrence*, of a practical knowledge of domestic household duties, as is too often the case at the present day. She, however, possessed a good share of common sense, was not too vain to be instructed, and practically understood house-keeping. Uniting, as she did, a very amiable disposition with her other good qualities, it is not surprising that she won the soldier's affections, and proved to him an agreeable and happy companion.

Murphy, who was twelve years the senior of Miss Feeck, was a stout, well made man, with rather a large body and small limbs, was not quite as tall as his lady-love, but was handsomely featured, having jet black hair, black eyes, and a skin shaded in the same dye. He possessed great muscular power, was fleet on foot, and wary in the covert as an Indian. He indulged too much in profane levity—was passionate, and often rough-tongued; but was warm-hearted and ardent in his attachment, and proved himself a kind and indulgent husband, an obliging neighbor and worthy citizen. He returned to Schoharie soon after the enemy desolated Vrooman's Land.

He had been back but a short time before it became apparent that what had, at an earlier day, seemed only a partiality on his part, and a juvenile perference on hers—won, perhaps, by his "deeds of noble daring"—was ripening into ardent, reciprocal love. But when did love's torrent ever flow smoothly on? As soon as their mutual preference became known to the parents of Miss Feeck, every effort was made by them to prevent the young lovers from meeting; and when they did chance to steal an interview, which sometimes happened when duty called him from the Middle to the Upper fort, it was, of necessity, brief and unsatisfactory. Every effort was made by the parents to prevent those interviews, and Margaret was prohibited from leaving her father's



house, *alone*, on any account. Indeed, she was not allowed to go out of the picketed inclosure to milk, unless a vigilant cousin, or some member of the family attended her—while Murphy was forbidden to enter the house under any pretext. The couple were plighted, but a serious obstacle interposed between them and Hymen's altar. The law then required the publishing of the banns for several Sabbaths in a religious meeting. Those marriage proposals were usually read by a clergyman, but as the Schoharie flocks were left to the mercy of the wolves, that of Murphy and his affianced was publicly read for several successive Sabbaths by John Van Dyck, (a good old deacon, living in the vicinity,) at a conference meeting held at the Middle fort, a certificate of which ceremony was placed in the hands of the groom.

Cupid is seldom wanting in stratagems, and agents to execute them. Although it had been contemplated by the parents to confine Margaret in a small room of the house, and she was so closely observed, still Murphy found repeated opportunities to nullify the paternal edict of non-intercourse, and communicate with his betrothed—not by letter, for he could not write—but through the agency of a trusty female named Maria Teabout, who was, as I have elsewhere stated, part native. Maria was the bearer of five or six verbal messages between the couple. As she was about to start on one of those errands, expressing some fear about her own safety, Murphy, whose character she almost venerated for the act, placed his hand upon her head, and repeating a few words—no doubt a lingo of his own, as he was at no loss for words—told her that no harm would ever befall her *if she proved faithful to him*. She assigned as a reason why she escaped injury or captivity in the war, the protection invoked at that time. As every thing was in a state of preparation for consummating their happiness, on a certain day about the 1st of October, 1780, Maria was sent with the final message from Murphy to his sweetheart—which was, in substance, *Come, for all things are now ready*. A report had some time before reached the ears of Margaret's parents, that she had engaged to marry Murphy; which report, in answer to their interrogatories, she denied, hoping by *white lies*

to lull their suspicions. Still their vigilance was not relaxed, and it was with no little difficulty Maria found an opportunity at this time to inform Margaret, that her lover had the necessary certificate of publication, and would meet her that evening near the river, with a horse, and convey her to the Middle fort. The answer to Murphy's last message was brief and artless; "*Tell him,*" said Margaret, "*I will meet him near the river, at the time appointed.*"

The day designated for a meeting with her lover, was one of no little anxiety to Margaret. The thought of leaving the home of her childhood against the wishes of her parents—possibly forever, and uniting her future destiny with that of a poor, though brave soldier, whose life was surrounded with constant danger, to say nothing of future prospects, was one of serious moment, as may be imagined, to a reflecting mind. But love will brave every danger, and encounter every hardship. In the course of the day she had matured her plan for eluding the vigilance of her parents, who little suspected her intended elopement; and with impatience she awaited the setting sun. Margaret dared not change an article of apparel, as that would excite suspicion, and in any thing but a bridal dress, she went at the evening hour for milking, to perform that duty, accompanied as usual by a neighboring female cousin on the same errand. The task accomplished, the girls separated, her cousin to go to her own home at a little distance from the fort, and our heroine to the presence of her mother. On arriving with her pail of milk, some of which had been emptied upon the ground, she told her mother that one of the cows, it not being with the rest, had not been milked.—"Then," said her mother, "you must go after it, that cow *must* be milked." This was placing matters precisely as she desired, and taking another pail she left the house with a light heart—barefooted, the better to disguise her real object. Hanging her pail upon a stake at the cow-yard, she stole away unobserved in the direction of the river, and was soon concealed from observation by the darkness then fast obscuring the Onistagrawa. Murphy, "as the evening shades prevailed," accompanied by three of his trusty comrades well armed, left the Middle fort, crossed the river and proceeded

along its western bank to meet his intended. Having gone full two-thirds of the way to the Upper fort, and above where she was to await his arrival, without meeting her, he began to apprehend his plan had proven abortive, and that her parents—aware of her intention—had taken proper means to prevent her leaving home. Satisfied in his mind that such was the case, he began to retrace his steps,—gently calling her name as he with his friends proceeded homeward. On arriving just below the present site of the Middleburgh bridge, great was his surprise to hear her sweet voice respond to his call from the opposite shore of the river. Fearing she might be followed, our heroine had not stopped where her lover had agreed to seek her, but went forward. Not meeting him, she supposed some military duty had called him away, and believing her intention to leave home had already been discovered, by finding the cow in the yard and the pail near, she resolved to proceed alone to the Middle fort, and had actually *forded the Schoharie*, the water at the time being quite cold, before the voice of Murphy greeted her ear. On his crossing the river, she mounted the horse behind him, and they rode to the fort where they were heartily welcomed by its inmates, about eight o'clock in the evening.

Some little time elapsed before the absence of Margaret was known at the paternal dwelling, which favored her flight; but when the discovery was made, it aroused the most lively apprehension of the parents, for her safety. Scouts were daily returning to the fort, with reports of either seeing parties of the enemy, or evidence of their recent proximity to the settlement; and the first supposition was, that one of those straggling parties had surprised and carried her into captivity. But on finding the empty milk-pail, and learning from Margaret's cousin that the cows had all been milked while she was present, and that Maria had been up that morning from the fort below—the elopement of the daughter was rendered evident. Margaret's father, accompanied by Joachim Follock, a soldier in the Upper fort, proceeded without delay to the Middle fort, the former often calling in Low Dutch to his *Mar-chra-che*, to which call the Onistagrawa feebly echoed,

*“ Scratch-you.”* On approaching the fort late in the evening, they were challenged by a sentinel, and not being able to give the countersign, came near being fired upon. Mr. Feeck could not, by the most earnest entreaties, prevail upon his daughter to return home with him that night—still, to know that she was safe and unharmed, he felt amply compensated, after so great an excitement, for his journey to the fort, and the danger of having a bullet sent through his head. He returned home, as we must suppose, little suspecting what the second *act* was to be in the comedy, of which he was not even to be a spectator, much less an actor.

As Margaret had left home in a sad plight to visit Hymen’s altar, her young female friends at the fort lent her from their own wardrobes, for the occasion—one a gown, another a bonnet and neckerchief, a third hose, shoes, &c.; until she was so clad as to make a very respectable appearance. Early in the day succeeding the elopement—preliminaries having been arranged the evening before—Murphy and Miss Feeck, accompanied by Miss Margaret Crysler, William Bouck, an uncle of the latter, and Sergt. William Lloyd, a Virginian, set out in a wagon furnished by Garret Becker, for Schenectada. Although Murphy had the certificate of Mr. Van Dyck, a worthy old gentleman who was pretty well known abroad, that a notice of his intention “to commit matrimony” had been legally read, still it was feared the father might take effectual means in the cities of Albany and Schenectada to prevent the marriage of his daughter: and in anticipation of such an event, Maj. Woolsey, who then commanded the fort, gave Murphy a furlough to go to the head-quarters of the Commander-in-chief, if necessary, to have the marriage take place.

The party went to Schenectada, where Murphy on his arrival purchased silk for a gown, and other articles necessary to complete the female attire of a bride, and the immediate requisition of several dress-makers of that ancient town hastily fitted them to the pretty form of our heroine; soon after which she was united in wedlock to the heroic Murphy—who had discovered himself successful, thus far, not only in the art of *war*, but of *love*. The couple were united, if I am rightly informed, by the Rev. Mr. Johnson,



who preached in Princetown several years, and subsequently in Harpersfield. On the following day the party returned to Schoharie, where the successful groom was loudly cheered by his compatriots in arms. During the absence of the wedding party, the officers of the garrison, assisted by the young ladies in the vicinity, made preparations for their reception in a becoming manner, at the house of Peter Becker, who then lived where Ralph Manning now resides—but a short distance from the Middle fort. A sumptuous feast was prepared for the numerous guests, which was followed in the evening by a ball, given in honor of the happy event. Nearly all the officers of the garrison were among the guests; on which occasion the beauty and fashion then existing in that valley were brought together. After the delighted company had partaken of a rich supper, the tables were removed and the guests began to dance. The young wife, from her modest and unsophisticated demeanor, as an old lady who was present assured the author, appeared to very good advantage in the evening, and “*was indeed a pretty bride.*” She, however, had previously been allowed to go into company but little, and her knowledge of dancing was limited—consequently at this ball, given in honor of her nuptials, she was led while performing her part of the dance.

Only two or three figures were danced, when a scout returned to the fort and reported, that they had fallen in with a party of Indians not far distant, whereupon the linstock was applied to the alarm gun, and its thunder went booming along the valley, echoing and re-echoing among the surrounding mountains—a most unwelcome sound at the moment, but its import too well understood to be disregarded; and the party all repaired to the fort to finish the festival.

*Now for a reconciliation.* When Margaret’s parents learned that she was married—that she was in truth the *wife* of Murphy—they were at first highly offended, and resolved never again to admit her into their house. But *time*, which has healed worse wounds than theirs—which were occasioned more by the *poverty* of their son-in-law than by his demerits—began to work its own



cure of wounded pride. The mother, who felt the absence of an only child, who had been her constant companion, the most sensibly, was the first to yield to the dictates of nature; and Maria, who had acted as a stair-case between the lovers, was now employed by Mrs. Feeck, to obtain for her an interview with her daughter. Margaret, if she had not dimpled cheeks, or a hand of French, and a foot of Chinese dimensions, had an affectionate and feeling heart, and longed to see her mother. The meeting, according to appointment, was held in a field not far from her father's dwelling: but as she dared not approach her mother, much less enter the picketed inclosure which surrounded their dwelling—fearful that an effort would be made to detain her—they conversed on a grass plot for some time, at a little distance apart. The parent was anxious to effect a reconciliation with Margaret and have her come home, but she could not think of admitting her Irish husband with her. "Never," said the daughter with spirit, "as much as I love home and my parents, will I enter your house until my husband, who is quite as good as I am, enters it with me!" As Margaret was about to return to the fort below, her mother requested her to remain until she could go to the house and get her something to eat. She soon returned with a pie, which—as the daughter retreated on her approach—she set down on the ground, then retired a little distance, and had the satisfaction to see her darling—her only child—advance, take it up, and eat of it. This act was witnessed by *Mrs. Frederick Mattice*. After eating part of the pie, she set out to go back, and the moistened eye of the mother followed, with womanly pride, the retreating footsteps of her daughter.

The father had not been present at the interview mentioned, and his heart also yearned to embrace his daughter, although pride prevented its acknowledgment. Repeated messages were sent to Margaret, offering full pardon on her part for the past, urging her to visit the paternal dwelling: to all of which, her answers were similar to the one previously given her mother. After a little time, it was hinted that Murphy intended to take his wife to Pennsylvania, which report caused the parents of Margaret much anx-

iety. A new mediator, in the person of Cornelius Feeck, a relative of the young bride, was now deputed to wait upon the latter. Among other fine sayings of his, which were uttered to induce her to return home, he told her "how much her father thought of her." "Yes," she replied, with dignity and some warmth—conscious of the change in her personal appearance which the goodly apparel bought by her generous husband had wrought—"When at home, I had two or three striped linsey petticoats and a calico frock: now see how I am drest!" she added, at the same time flouncing the skirt of a rich silk gown—"This shows who cares most for me!" She also intimated the intention of soon accompanying her husband to Pennsylvania.

On learning the result of their kinsman's interview with their daughter, who had heard from her own pretty mouth (which, gentle reader, was neither too large nor too small,) that she expected soon to remove to another state, the anxiety of the parents became exceedingly irksome. The fear of losing their daughter forever, wrought a wonderful change in the feelings of the parents, and false pride now yielded at once to the Christian spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation; and the next message from them offered a full pardon to groom and bride for past offences, promising to bury in oblivion all former animosities—receive them home with a festival such as the Germans and Dutch were proverbially known to make at weddings in former days—and treat them as children deserved, having no bad habits, and no serious fault; unless *genuine love* could be so called. The liberal terms proposed were accepted: a treaty of family alliance formed; and at an appointed time, the happy couple, accompanied by about *thirty* officers and soldiers, and a party of citizens—the whole attended by martial music—proceeded to the Upper fort. As the guests drew near the entrance, Mr. Feeck ran forward, threw open the gate, and extending to Murphy and his wife each a hand, welcomed them home. Said he, as he grasped the hand of the patriot soldier, "You have my daughter, but you shall not take her to Pennsylvania: I have enough to support us all." Murphy was a man of powerful lungs, and giving the old man's hand a

gripe he long remembered, replied in his usually loud voice—"She is no longer your's, Masther Fake ; she is my wife. I did not marry her to get your property, as I can take care of her myself." As the party entered the house, the parents both wept for joy at the restoration of their child ; and the good things were abundantly served to the guests, whose hearts—if I dare tell it in temperance times—"were made glad with good wine." This reconciliation took place about a month after the marriage ; from which time, the couple made their home at Mr. Feeck's. On the death of her parents, Margaret inherited their valuable estate, and her sons still live on the patrimonial farm.—*Mrs. Angelica Vrooman, Mrs. Van Slyck, Mrs. Frederick Mattice, Maria Teabout, and others.*

Most of the riflemen who continued in Schoharie during the war, and some of the more fearless citizens, enlisted to perform the duty of scouts, more or less of whom, were kept constantly out from the Schoharie forts, in the summer season. They were called *Rangers*, a term very applicable. Their duties were at times of the most dangerous and fatiguing kind, and not unfrequently in the fall and spring of the year, when they had to encamp on the ground at night without a fire, they suffered almost incredible hardships. The music of those scouts, was that produced by a *conch-shell*, which was carried by the leader, and served to call the party together when they chanced to become separated in the woods.—*David Elerson.*

If the duties of the Schoharie Rangers were peculiarly hazardous and perplexing, still they saw some happy hours. Among the soldiers at the Middle fort were two fiddlers, who often played for their comrades to dance, when the latter could find female partners. On a certain occasion, the officers at the Middle fort, resolved to have a dance. The soldiers concluded to have one on the same night, and spared no pains or expense to rival the officers. They sent to Albany for *ten gallons of wine* among other *necessaries*, and succeeded in getting the ladies all away from their epauletted superiors, so as entirely to prevent the latter from dancing. My informant said that this dance cost him *thirty dollars*, and he supposed it cost several others quite as much.—*Elerson*

In the fall of 1780, a small party of the enemy, a dozen or more in number, entered the Ballston settlement, under the direction of Joseph Bettys, a subaltern officer in the British service, known in border difficulties by the familiar name of Jo. Bettys. He resided in the Ballston settlement previous to the war, and when the contest began, took up arms for the states, but afterwards entered the British service, proving to his former neighbors a source of frequent terror.

Major Andrew Mitchell, of Ballston, having visited Schenectada on business, there learned, possibly through the Oneida runners, that a small detachment, mostly tories, had left Canada, the destination of which was unknown. In the afternoon, Mitchell set out for home on horseback, accompanied by one Armstrong, a neighbor. After proceeding several miles, and arriving on the north side of Allplass creek, the thought occurred to him, that possibly *he* might not be free from danger, as a liberal reward was paid for the persons or scalps of officers. He was riding through the woods at the time, and scarcely had the thought visited his mind, which caused him to quicken the speed of his horse, when he was hailed in a commanding voice to *stop*, by a man who sprang upon a fallen tree near the road. The Major put spurs to his gallant steed and was soon out of sight of the highwayman, who fired at him as he passed. Armstrong could not keep up with his companion, but as his person was not sought for, he escaped unmolested.

Before the Revolution, Jo. Bettys and Jonathan Miller, another celebrated tory, dwelt, one on each side of Maj. Mitchell. After the transaction occurred which is noticed above, it was satisfactorily ascertained that the man who fired on the major, was his old neighbor Miller; who had accompanied Bettys in his expedition, and then had at his beck some half a dozen genial spirits. The ground being sandy, the horse's hoofs made but little noise, and the militia officer was not observed until opposite the party, secreted on both sides of the road expressly to capture him.

An enterprise of Bettys in the Ballston settlement, within a few days of the affair related, proved more successful. He sur-



prised and captured Aaron Banta, and his sons, Henry and Christian, Ensign Epenetus White, and some half a dozen others. The elder Banta was left on parole, and the rest of the prisoners, who were among the best citizens in the vicinity, hurried off to Canada. The escape and return of part of them with Col. Gordon, who was taken the year before, is already known to the reader.—*Charles and Hugh, sons of Maj. Mitchell.*

A scout, consisting of Timothy Murphy, Bartholomew C. Vrooman, William Leek, and Robert Hutt, under the command of Sergeant Lloyd, left the Middle fort only a day or two after the celebration of Murphy's marriage, expecting to be gone eight or nine days. Their absence was protracted to the thirteenth day, when they were welcomed at the fort, on the evening preceding the invasion of Schoharie by Sir John Johnson. The scout while absent, visited Punchkill, Sharon, Cherry-Valley, Unadilla, Susquehanna, Delhi, Minisink, and Cairo; seeing the tracks of Indians in several places, but none of their persons. They however captured a tory prisoner at Prattsville, and brought him to the fort. The return of this scout was most opportune for the welfare of the garrison, as will soon appear.

In the latter part of September, 1780, Sir John Johnson left Niagara with about five hundred British, Royalist, and German troops, and pursued the road opened the year before by Gen. Sullivan, most of the way from the Genesee valley to the Susquehanna; where he was joined by a large body of Indians and Tories there assembled under Capt. Brandt; making his effective force as estimated at the several forts, one thousand men. There is a tradition, that several hundred of the Indians who left Niagara with Brant, returned, owing to a quarrel. Johnson's object in making this long journey so late in the season, was to ravage the beautiful valleys of the Schoharie and Mohawk rivers, when the crops of the husbandman were secured and could be burned, and if possible to capture and destroy the three Schoharie forts.

From Charlotte river, the eastern branch of the Susquehanna, the enemy proceeded toward the Schoharie, and passing down Panther creek, arrived near its shore in the evening of October



16th, and encamped just above Otteagus-berg,\* a romantic mountain on the west side of the river, near the upper end of Vrooman's Land.

*Judge Brown* assured the author, that two days before the arrival of the enemy, he obtained a knowledge of their approach through a sister who was tory-fied, and communicated the fact to Col. Vrooman; whereupon Marcus Bellinger, the supervisor, was sent to Albany to procure a wagon-load of ammunition, in anticipation of such an event. Bellinger was detained in the city from some cause, but arrived in safety at the Lower fort, on the evening of the 16th inst.

Col. Johnson intended to resume his march sufficiently early on the morning of the 17th,† to pass the Upper fort, situated about three miles from his encampment, unobserved, and arriving at the Middle fort, just at daylight, surprise and capture it; supposing, with very good reason, that the possession of it would soon cause the surrender of the other two more feebly garrisoned. The enemy, passing along the bank of the river, crossed it nearly opposite, and not one third of a mile distant from the Upper fort. Owing to some unknown delay, the troops were not in motion as early as they had intended, and the rear of the army was yet upon the bank of the river, when Peter Feeck, who had started to go after cows just as day began to dawn, discovered it, and notified a sentinel, who discharged his musket. The troops were instantly called out, and the alarm gun thrice fired. Captains Jacob Ha-

\* This mountain was so called by the early German settlers, and signified the Panther-mountain, the creek taking its name from it near which it enters the Schoharie. A mountain situated on the opposite side of the river above Panther mountain, distant from the latter not more than a mile or two, was called by the early Germans, Wock-holter-berg; and signified the Berry mountain—so called from the unusual quantity of juniper or other berries found upon it. The Schoharie by its serpentine course, flows at the base of both mountains, giving its banks a rugged appearance.

† Col. Stone, in the "*Life of Brant*," erroneously dates this transaction on the 16th of October. *Campbell*, who wrote at an earlier period, has given its true date, and so far as it goes, a much more authentic account of the invasion. Col. Stone blended part of the invasion in August, with that in October, and incorporated several popular errors in the narrative.

ger, and Joseph Harper, both men of acknowledged courage, with two companies of troops, numbering it is believed, less than one hundred men, were in this fort at the time. The command of the garrison devolved on Capt. Hager, the senior officer, who sent a party of volunteers to the river early in the morning, among whom were Henry Hager, his son, Lawrence Bouck, and Isaac Vrooman. They saw several of the enemy on the opposite shore, and crossed the river and captured an Indian who lagged behind his fellow. As they approached him he fired upon them, the ball striking the powder-horn of Vrooman. When they drew up to fire, he sprang behind a tree, which received three of the bullets discharged at him : he then fled, abandoning his horse, a poor black mare with a sore back, which, with a heavy pack on, was taken to the fort.

The Middle fort, at this, time was under the command of Major Woolsey, a continental officer, unfitted for the important duties of the station he held, who is said to have been a *broken officer* before going to Schoharie.\* Col. Vrooman was fortunately in the fort, as were Lieut. Col. Zielie and Maj. Thomas Ecker, officers belonging to his regiment. Captains Lansing, Pool, Hall, Miller and Richtmyer, were in the fort on that day, several of whom were continental officers, and all, it is believed, were men of real courage. The fort was garrisoned by about two hundred continental troops, or nine months' men, as then called, and between one and two hundred militia. Once during the night preceding the invasion, the sentinels gave a partial alarm, caused by the approach of a hostile scout.

Some of the citizens and soldiers were already up at the Middle fort, and hearing the alarm gun of the fort above, the drums were quickly beating to arms. Livingston, an officer of artillery, was looking for a match to respond to the evidence of danger, when Susannah Vrooman ran to the house and brought him a live coal,

\*When Major Woolsey, who was remarkably spry, first went to Schoharie, and was seen to leap fences, and give other evidences of agility, he was taken to be very smart, and was, of course, much respected, until found wanting in courage. He was the first man who wore a garment, since called a roundabout, in the Schoharie valley, considered at the time a novelty.—*Mrs. Angelica Vrooman.*

with which the gun was instantly fired. The voice of a brass nine pounder was thrice responded to from the Lower fort, and war's thunder rolled along the valley. The discharge of the alarm guns at the forts, became the signal for the foe to apply the incendiary torch, which was accordingly done to the buildings of Frederick Mattice, situated on the east side of the river in Clauverwy, (where Edward Pindar now resides) and opposite that part of Vrooman's Land which was desolated the preceding August. The barn of Mattice was the first of the beacon lights seen at the Middle fort that day, the number of which, from buildings, barracks of grain, and stacks of hay, viewed at that place, was estimated by an eye-witness, at *three hundred*. An invasion having been anticipated, the citizens lodged at the several garrisons, and the movement of the hostiles commencing thus early, no individuals were found in their dwellings except such as were either tinctured with royalty, or chose to brave the coming dangers to save their property.

A strong northeast wind continued to blow throughout the day, and served to fan the flames of destruction. The weather was also exceedingly cold, and snow in squalls almost constantly filled the air. Maj. Ecker called for volunteers soon after daylight, and *nineteen* bold spirits left the fort with him to learn the cause of alarm, just as the fire of Mattice's buildings was discovered. As the wind then blew almost a gale, the soldiers left their hats, and substituted kerchiefs tied closely about their heads. The head of Timothy Murphy was adorned by the one that had concealed the pretty neck of his young bride, placed there by her own trembling hands; the head of Bartholomew C. Vrooman with that of Susannah Vrooman, his intended, (to whom he was married about two weeks afterwards,) and those of others by the shawls of friends or lovers. Maj. Ecker, among whose followers were Lieut. Martinus Zielie, Sergeant Lloyd, Murphy, Elerson, Hoefer, Vrooman, Richard Hanson, Peter Van Slyck, Wilbur, Joachim Folluck, Adam Shell, Tufts, and Leek, proceeded from the fort in the direction of the present village of Middleburgh, and fell in with the enemy's advance not far from the site of the Brick church. Murphy

was on the extreme right toward the river. Ecker's men now fired upon the enemy from behind a board fence, and some of them several times. From his position, Murphy discovered that the enemy was extending his right to cut off their retreat to the fort, and communicated the fact to Maj. Ecker, who instantly ordered a retreat. Murphy, although he had the greatest distance to run, was the last man who left the ground, and remained at the fence until he obtained a fair extra shot, when he also fled to the fort. Hundreds of balls were fired within gun-shot at the volunteers, and several boards in the fence from which Murphy fled, were literally riddled with bullets; and yet not one of the party was wounded. Most of the volunteers were riflemen, and wore short linen frocks, through which several of the enemy's shot passed, as also they did through other parts of their dress, and one struck the powder-horn of Vrooman.

Colonel Johnson had given orders to his troops to spare the churches in Schoharie, but the Dutch church, standing opposite the burying ground, and near the present residence of Dr. James Van Gaasbeck, in Middleburgh, was burned. It is said to have been set on fire by William Crysler, a tory, owing to a grudge he held against some of its members.—*Andrew Loucks*. This church was built after the model of the ancient Dutch church in Albany, with a steeple rising from the centre. It was well finished within, and painted white outside.—*Mrs. Van Slyck*.

Early on the morning of the 17th, Maj. Joseph Becker, then in command of the Lower fort, knowing the lack of powder at the Middle fort, sent two men, each with a bag containing the necessary article on his back to that garrison. Hearing the alarm guns of the Upper fort, and the response of the other two, they increased their speed, and fortunately arrived at their destination just as the enemy invested that post. Mattice Ball, one of the two, and from whose lips this fact was obtained, said they were detained there during the day.

The enemy, crossing the flats obliquely, passed the fort near the hill east, and halted on a small eminence nearly north of it, in the orchard of Peter Becker, near the present residence of Peter



I. Borst. At this time many of the Indians were scattered over the flats, engaged in the work of destruction. As the enemy were proceeding from the river toward the hill east of the fort ; Lansing, a captain of the Albany militia, followed by a party of volunteers, sallied in that direction and met the advance, with which he exchanged several shots. *Elerson*, stated that at this time he was behind a board fence near the wood, beyond his comrades, when he observed an officer in a red coat advance from the British ranks, at whom he discharged his rifle. He saw the enemy's guns leveled at him, and instantly fled to the fort. He supposed that *seven hundred* fired at him in this flight, yet he escaped from them untouched. The fence from which he ran, like that which had concealed *Murphy* just before, was completely peppered with bullets. Capt. Miller, who commanded a company of Claverack militia, then in the fort, called to *Elerson's* wife, to see her husband run. Col. Vrooman, also, as *Elerson* was informed, watched his flight with intense anxiety. A shot sent among the British troops from the brass-cannon, while they were firing on *Elerson*, caused some confusion among *Johnson's Greens*. They were then passing the most exposed part of the fortress. There was a small gate on the east side, through which Capt. Lansing and his men entered.

Col. Johnson had with him a small mortar, and a field-piece—the latter a brass six-pounder. The carriage for the cannon was carried in parts, and required screwing together. They were made ready to fire, at the stand he had chosen in *Becker's* orchard, and a cannonading and bombardment commenced, while a constant firing was kept up with small arms, but generally at too great a distance for the latter to take effect. Three shells were well thrown from this position by the enemy at the fort, and many cannon-shot were fired but with less precision, the most of them passing entirely over the destined object. The first shell fired, sung in the air like a pigeon, and exploded directly over the house ; and as its fragments fell upon the roof, Mrs. Richtmyer, an old lady, then in an upper room, who had been an invalid, and unable to rise alone from her bed for a long time, was so frightened that she



sprang from it, and went below, surviving the effect but a short time. The second shell fell within the pickets near the well, and while the fuse was burning off and the ball dancing in a mud hole, every person exposed to its explosion had ample time to gain a respectful distance, and it scattered its fragments without injuring any one.\* The third shell fell through the roof of the main building, and lodging on a pile of feather-beds in the chamber, which were deposited upon several chests of bedding, it exploded tearing the beds in pieces, doing little other mischief, except that of frightening Christian Rickard, an old bachelor, who chanced to be in the room, almost to death. The explosion completely filled the room with feathers, and groping his way down stairs, Rickard made his appearance below, where many of the women and children were, covered with feathers, and spitting down from his mouth, which sudden fear had caused him to open too widely for such an atmosphere. When asked what had happened, he replied in Low Dutch, (as kindly rendered by a Dutch friend, at my elbow) "*Ik donk de duyvel is op de solder, de veri vliegen so rondt dat ik niet zien con.*"—I think the devil is in the chamber, for the feathers fly around so that I cannot see. The beds were set on fire but were easily extinguished, as water had been provided for such emergency.

After the firing had been continued for some time by the enemy, and several shells thrown, it suddenly ceased, and a white flag was seen to leave the British ranks and advance toward the fort. The flag-bearer was accompanied on his right by an officer in a green uniform, and on his left by a fifer, playing Yankee-doodle. When the flag was discovered approaching, Maj. Woolsey gave orders to have it admitted, but not another officer in the fort, to their credit be it said, was in favor of its admission; and Murphy and Elerson, who conjectured *what their fate might*

\*It is stated in the *Life of Brant*, that a woman brought several buckets of water from a well without the works exposed to the enemy's fire, for the thirsty soldiers; one of whom, when required, dared not perform the feat. *This story has no foundation in truth.* The well was within the pickets, and afforded an abundant supply of water, as I have been assured by nearly a dozen credible witnesses, who were in the Middle fort at the time alluded to.

be, should the enemy learn the actual strength of the garrison, and succeed in its capture—determined, so the latter informed the author, that before the flag should enter the fort, one or the other of them should shoot Woolsey himself. On that day, Murphy used his double-barreled rifle,\* and as the flag drew near he fired upon it—not with the intention of killing its bearer, or either of his companions, as is generally supposed, but to say, in effect, “approach any nearer and you are a dead man.” The trio with the flag halted, faced about and marched back to their former station.

When Murphy fired on the flag, Maj. Woolsey was not present, having visited his quarters to prepare himself to enforce submission to his commands; for soon after, he returned pistol in hand, and demanded who had dared to disobey his orders? “I fired on the flag,” said Murphy. Maj. W. then threatened the brave soldier with instant death if he repeated the act; and the latter, who believed the willingness of the commandant to admit the flag proceeded from cowardice alone, retorted with warmth—“Sooner than see that flag enter this fort, will I send a bullet through your heart.” Seeing an evident disposition in all the officers present to sustain Murphy—for they had rallied round him to a man, (not from a desire to see just commands violated, but to defend the fort at all hazards,) the major walked towards the house. In this time, the flag attended as before, had again advanced, and Maj. W. had not proceeded two rods when Murphy again fired, and its bearer faced about and retired.

During this parley the firing on both sides had ceased, with the exception stated, and was not resumed until after Col. Johnson, from his great desire to get a flag into the fort, despatched it by the same party a third time. It is possible that from his position he had, with a spy-glass, observed the movement of Maj.

\* Much has been said about Murphy’s double-barreled gun—and more than it merited: at least, so a son of Murphy assured the writer he had often heard his father say. He had such a gun, while at Schoharie, but it was so heavy he seldom used it, except on garrison duty. An anecdote told by *Campbell*, of the use of this gun, I have not been able to authenticate so as to warrant its insertion.

Woolsey. They had not proceeded as far as at first, however, when a third bullet from Murphy's rifle passed over their heads, saying, in effect, "thus far, but no farther;" and they returned to the ranks. The firing was then renewed.

Maj. Woolsey, after the spar with Murphy, entered the dwelling where the women and children were confined; but their jeers savoring too much of satire, he left their presence and sought safety elsewhere. The cellar under the kitchen part of the dwelling was occupied as a magazine, and Col. Vrooman, to conceal the deficiency of powder, brought it himself when wanted. All the officers in the fort, except Woolsey, divested themselves of their hats early in the siege and substituted cravats: while several of them laid off their coats, and taking guns, all fought manfully.\* As powder was needed Col. Vrooman laid down his gun and sword and went to get it. Near the cellar door he encountered Maj. Woolsey, who had just left the presence of the women, as may be supposed, not in very good humor. "Maj. Woolsey, is this your place," interrogated the brave colonel, "who are placed here to defend this fort?" He replied, half dead through fear—"Col. Vrooman, the men will not obey me, and I give up the command to you." At this moment a cannon shot struck the house and fell harmless at their feet. The colonel instantly caught it up, and playfully extended it to the major, with the simple exclamation—"Send that back to them!" With perfect indifference the coward replied, "That I think would be s—n work." The fire of the Dutch colonel was instantly ignited at the indifference and filthy expression of the commandant, and speaking in his usually quick manner, he rejoined—"Maj. Woolsey, had I my sword I would run you through with it." The major, perhaps ashamed of his conduct, wheeled and walked off, and the colonel got his powder and returned to his men, exclaiming as he gave them the necessary article, "Fire away my brave lads, we have plenty of ammuniton." The troops were gratified to learn that

\* In the early part of the war the captains all carried guns, but at a later period they were prohibited from bearing them, *from a complaint that while loading they neglected duties to their men.*

the command of the fort was surrendered to him, and obeyed his orders with alacrity. More than once when he went for powder, as he afterwards confessed, did his hair rise on his head, not from fear of the enemy, but lest the small supply of ammunition should be completely exhausted, and the foe, becoming conscious of it, storm their works.—*Mrs. Angelica Vrooman.*

The firing of shells was not renewed by the enemy, and the discharge of grape and round shot was only continued at intervals from the fort, as the supply of powder would not warrant its constant use. Destructionists were to be seen at this period of the siege, scattered over the flats in almost every direction. The garrison was too weak to make a bold sortie, but many small parties were sent out during the day to harass the enemy, and save, if possible, a large barn belonging to John Becker, which stood almost in the direction of Col. Johnson's position: around which clustered numerous stacks of hay and grain. As several Indians were seen approaching the barn, a party from the fort went to meet them. Several shots were exchanged, and Sergeant Cooper, of Albany, received a wound in one leg; and was instantly borne off by two of his comrades to the fort: but while proceeding thither, he received a ball through his body, of which his carriers were unconscious. As they entered the fort, Susannah Vrooman enquired where Cooper was wounded? The reply was, "in the leg." She remarked that he bled from the body, and on laying him down, it was ascertained that he had received a wound there, of which he soon after died.

About this time, several volunteers entered the fort, who had been pursued by the enemy. Miss Vrooman stood near the entrance in an exposed situation, and Samuel Reynolds, as he entered, said to her—"Susannah, get away from here or you will be shot!" The words were scarcely uttered before a ball entered his own head, of which wound he died nine days after. He was from New Jersey: was a likely soldier, and died lamented. Jeremiah Loucks was also wounded in one arm, and Tufts slightly in the head—the latter, while entering the fort—who, with the two mortally wounded, it is believed, were all that were injured



belonging to the Middle fort. The wounded were properly attended by Doct. John King, the settled physician at that place, who acted as surgeon during the war.

Nicholas Sloughier, who acquired the reputation of a good soldier, had a very sick child in the fort, and as he was leaving it, with a party of volunteers under Murphy, was told that his child appeared to be dying, and he had better remain. "I can do the child no good," was his reply; "my duty is to protect the *living* as well as the *dying*." Before his return, he and Murphy took a prisoner, dressed in a green uniform; who gave his name as Benjamin Butts. He was a New England man, who had been made prisoner some time before, and while in Canada, had enlisted into the British service as a *ranger*, to embrace an opportunity to desert. He returned home soon after.—*Mrs. Van Slyck*.

During the siege of the Middle fort, a scout under Lieut. Martinus Zielie, captured a French Indian while stealing a horse owned by Harmanus Bouck. Lewis Denny, a French Indian, nearly white, (mentioned as having scalped a squaw and afterwards married her,) joined the Americans in the Revolution, and remained at Middleburgh. Being in the fort when Lieut. Zielie returned with his prisoner, the latter was so saucy, that Lewis, who could understand his insolent gibberish, instantly knocked him down. This prisoner is said to have been an Indian interpreter.—*George Richtmyer*.

Elerson had command of a few rangers during the day; one of whom, John Wilbur, fell in with a tory, catching a horse, near the present residence of Peter Swart, and asked him to what party he belonged? He replied, "*the Indian party*;" and instantly received a bullet from Wilbur's rifle. He took off his scalp, and as he entered the fort with it in his hand, Maj. Woolsey told him he ought to have his own scalp taken off. This man and another, shot during the day, were supposed to be Indians at the time, but proved to be tories from the vicinity of Albany.—*David Elerson, Mrs. Van Slyck and George Richtmyer*.

While Elerson was out with his party, he saw an Indian approaching the stacks at the barn near the fort, at whom he fired.



The warrior ran off towards the woods east of the barn. In the following spring, a dead Indian was discovered in that direction, by Bill, a slave owned by John Becker, while getting fire-wood. He was found sitting with his back against a tree, having his gun between his knees and resting in his arms. His eyes had been dug out, as supposed, by birds. This Indian was presumed to have been the one fired on by Elerson.—*Elerson, Mrs. Van Slyck and Judge Hager.*

We have seen that Murphy did not spare his rifle balls when the Middle fort was invested. Needing an additional supply, Angelica Vrooman, as she informed the author, took Murphy's bullet mould, lead, and an iron spoon, went to her father's tent, and there moulded a quantity of bullets for that fearless ranger, amidst the roar of cannon and musketry.

Jacob Winne, of Albany, was commissary at the Schoharie forts; occupying a part of the Becker house, two rooms in which are said to have accommodated *five families each*. Samuel Van Vechten, of Albany, was press-master, and Douw Fonda, forester, all of whom, it is believed, were in the Middle fort when besieged by the troops under Johnson. The commissary was a little *corned* during the action, and finding Maj. Woolsey stowed away in one of the small family huts, bored him not a little. Not only the commissary, but many others, some of whom were females, made themselves merry at the coward's expense, jeering and teasing him with perfect impunity.—*Mrs. Van Slyck and Andrew Loucks.*

Col. Johnson remained with the regular troops near the Middle fort, until his destructives had effectually demolished every species of property they possibly could in that vicinity, when he moved down the valley about 3 o'clock, P. M. After the enemy were out of sight, Maj. Woolsey ordered several apple trees near to be cut down and brought around the fort, fearing the enemy might return and attempt to storm the works. He left Schoharie the next day, and was never seen again leaping fences on horseback, in that delightful valley.—*Andrew Loucks and others.*

As may be supposed, the most intense anxiety was felt at the Upper, while the firing continued at the Middle fort; and soon after it began, Capt. Hager gave orders that in case the enemy appeared before that fort, the women and children should go into a long cellar under the Feeck house. While preparations were in progress to resist an attack should it be made, Mary Haggidorn, a buxom lass of goodly proportions, who partook of the spirit which animated her brothers, and who had heard the cellar order with other feelings than those inspired by fear, stepped up to the commandant and thus addressed him: "Captain, I shall not go into that cellar! Should the enemy come I will take a spear, which I can use as well as any *man*, and help defend the fort." Capt. Hager was gratified to find a soldier where he little expected one, and admiring her fearless spirit, he replied, "Then take a spear, Mary, and be ready at the pickets to repel an attack!" She did take a spear, nor was it discarded until the danger was past. As soon as the firing ceased the second time at the fort below, Capt. Hager dispatched Ensign Peter Swart, William Zimmer, and Joseph Evans to learn whether their worst fears were to be realized—whether the British cross had taken the place of Freedom's stars. On their return with the report that all was safe, the welkin rang with *huzzas for the American flag*.—*Manuscript of Judge Hager.*

What loss the besiegers sustained in their attack on the Middle fort is uncertain, but it is supposed to have been several times greater than that of the Americans. Where had formerly stood the barn of Judge Borst, charred bones were found, supposed to have been those of several of their number which they had purposely burned. What induced Sir John to abandon further attempts to take the fort is uncertain, but it is conjectured that from the firing on the flag he was led to suppose the troops were conscious of being able to defend it. The enemy succeeded, during the day, in burning part of the grain which had been stacked near the fort for safety.—*Mrs. Van Slyck.*

Maj. Becker had at his command at the Lower fort, on the arrival of Sir John Johnson in its vicinity, Capt. Stubrach with his

company of militia, a part of the *associate exempts* under Captain Peter Snyder, (who succeeded Capt. Vrooman at his death,) and a body of Norman's-kill militia ; making his effective force, from one hundred and fifty to two hundred men.—*Peter Vrooman\**

Early in the morning, Jacob Van Dyck, Anthony Brontner and Barney Cadugney were dispatched by Maj. Becker to ascertain the cause of the firing at the forts above. Arriving at the house of Jacob J. Lawyer, they found his wife and a wench at home preparing to bake. At the house of Hendrick Shafer, the females were also at home, where they saw food upon a table. The women of those families chose to brave the dangers of the day, to save their dwellings from the general conflagration, while the men were in the fort below. The scout proceeded as far as Bel-linger's, and saw the British troops about a mile distant. Near this place, they met the advance of the enemy, and were pursued by seven Indians led by Seth's Henry. They were fired upon, and the balls struck near them. A ball striking the fence by Cadugney's side, threw a splinter into his arm. He called to his companions that he was wounded ; and near the present residence of Peter Richtmyer, Van Dyck drew the splinter from his arm, telling him he was not hurt much : which he would hardly believe. Gaining upon the Indians, who had halted to reload their pieces, Cadugney took occasion, as the latter were out of sight, to conceal himself in a hollow stump—near which they passed without discovering him.

When the firing ceased in the Middle fort for the flag to advance, the inmates of the fort below were apprehensive it had been taken, and Major Becker dispatched another scout, consisting of George Snyder, Jacob Enders, John Van Wart and John Hutt, to ascertain whether the fort had been captured. The second scout met the first near where Storm Becker resides, and joined it in flight. They were hotly pursued, and were obliged to scatter. Enders and Snyder were together, and as the enemy were leveling a volley of balls at them, they sprang behind a rock, against

\* He was a major of militia after the war. He married Angelica, daughter of Col. Peter Vrooman.

which several of the leaden messengers spent their force. Enders, who was fleet as an antelope, often took trees to favor the flight of his less speedy companions, which always treed the enemy. Van Dyck struck off into the woods east of the residence of Jacob H. Shafer, again struck the flats below, and regained the fort in safety. Enders and Snyder also arrived there before the enemy. Van Wart (who is said to have put on his go-to-meeting hat before he left the fort,) had observed on his way up, several apple-pies just taken from the oven at Lawyer's, and not having had any breakfast, declared his intention of having some of the pie on his return. He was warned not to stop; but disregarding the caution of his companions, as the enemy were not then in sight, he halted. While he was eating, Westhoft, a German school teacher, who had been teaching school the preceding summer in Ingold's barn near by, opened the door and exclaimed: "Here they come!" as a party of Indians arrived at the house. In the act of jumping from a back window, he was fired upon in front and rear, the enemy having already surrounded the house. He was instantly dispatched, and his body much mutilated. He was a Low Dutchman, born near Albany; was a cooper by trade, and had resided nine years in the Ingold family, near where he was shot.

As the Indians entered Lawyer's dwelling, one of them raised a tomahawk to strike the schoolmaster, but Mrs. Lawyer seized his arm and arrested the fatal blow. She pleaded for his life and it was spared, adding another evidence to the influence of woman. Brett, an old female slave, was considered a lawful prize, and was taken along a little distance, but was finally permitted to return. —*Anna Eve, widow of Jacob J. Lawyer.\**

John Ingold, who dwelt where his son and namesake now resides, was in the fort that day with all his family except Anthony Witner, his step-father. As a hostile invasion was expected, the

\* *Mrs. Lawyer* stated to the writer, in 1835, that while her husband and a hired man were harvesting grain during the war, they were fired upon by the enemy, and the laborer killed; the former fled across the river and escaped. Mrs. Lawyer was a daughter of Philip and Christina Berg. She had two children, a son and daughter. The latter is now the wife of Ex-Gov. Bouck.



present John Ingold, then a lad fourteen years old, went the evening before with a wagon to take old Mr. Witner to the fort, but he declined going, and said he chose to stay and defend his house. He had given his grandson an old gun which was then at the fort; this he requested to have sent to him in the morning. The Ingold dwelling was burned, and as a part of two skeletons were found in its ruins, it was conjectured that a plunderer had been killed by Mr. Witner, before his death. The remains of the latter were identified by his silver knee-buckles. A barrack filled with peas, standing scarcely three yards distant from Ingold's barn, was set on fire and the enemy supposed from its proximity it would burn the latter; but as the former stood west of the building and the wind blew a gale from the northeast, the fire was fortunately not communicated to it. A fence on fire and slowly burning to the windward, which would have carried the flame to the barn, was extinguished after the enemy left. The dwelling of Hendrick Shafer was not burned, that of Tunis Shafer, which stood where David Shafer lives, was burnt with its out buildings; and that of Lawyer, below Ingold's, shared the same fate the night following.—*John Ingold, Mattice Ball, and others.*

The firing at Middleburgh was heard in Cobelskill, ten miles distant, and Lawrence Lawyer and Henry Shafer proceeded towards Schoharie, to learn the cause. Arriving on the hills near, they caught a view of the general conflagration; and they unexpectedly fell in with a party of Indians, but escaped their notice by the timely movement of several cattle in the woods close by, which directed the enemy from their concealment. The two friends remained secreted until the Indians had retired, when they hastened back to Cobelskill, to warn the citizens of their danger.—*Lawrence Lawyer.*

Johnson's troops had been so long in the valley, that ample time was gained to get every thing in readiness at the Lower fort, for its defence. Several barrels of water were provided to extinguish the church, which contained the women and children, should it be set on fire. The magazine which was thus liberally replenished, was kept *bcneath the pulpit in the church*, and was



under the charge of Dr. George Werth, a physician, settled in the vicinity, who acted as surgeon. In the tower of the church were stationed, under Ensign Jacob Lawyer, jr., fifteen or twenty good marksmen, who could command considerable territory. Quite a number of fearless women at the Lower fort are said to have stood ready at the pickets, when the enemy appeared in sight, armed with spears, pitchforks, poles, &c.,\* to repel an attack.—*Maj. Peter Vrooman, Col. Dietz, of Beaver Dam, Jacob Becker, Judge Brown and others.*

The enemy approached the Lower fort in a body, about four o'clock P. M., and were saluted with a small mounted cannon without the pallisades, (the one formerly owned by John Lawyer,) charged with grape and cannister shot. Col. Johnson raised a spy-glass as the swivel was drawn out, and suddenly lowering it, said to his men, *It is only a grass-hopper, march on!* It was supposed to have done fearful execution, as many of the enemy fell, but to the surprise of the Americans, they arose and advanced; having only fallen to let the shot pass over them. A grape shot entered the knapsack of a soldier, and lodged against a pair of shoes. He was more frightened than hurt, and carried the shot to Canada. The American soldiers were hardly able to obtain shoes, and this Canadian had an extra new pair, which saved his life.—*Becker, Van Dyck, Vrooman and Dietz.*

Jacob Van Dyck, Nicholas Warner, Jacob Becker, John Ingold, Sen., and John Kneiskern, were among the men stationed with

\* Judge Brown, who was accounted a genuine whig, was suspected, though unjustly I believe, of disaffection on the day Schoharie was burnt. He stated to the writer, that he was at the Lower fort on the morning of that day, and aided in the early preparations for its defence; and had intended to volunteer his services in case of a hostile attack. His wife was determined to go to Livingston's manor, where she had relatives; and to set out that day. She went out and seated herself in the wagon, outside the pickets; and declared her intention to remain there and be shot rather than again enter the fort, where she had already been over two years. Brown probably knew, that "*If a woman will, she will,*" and he might "*depend on't;*" said he felt ashamed to be seen quarreling with his wife—reluctantly yielded to her wishes—entered the wagon and drove off. The smoke of burning buildings was then visible up the valley. This I consider *another specimen of female influence.*

Lawyer in the church tower. When Capt. Stubrach and others were firing the "grass-hopper," Peter, a brother of Ensign Lawyer, who had command of the men on the church, was seen to approach the fort from the direction of the river, in advance of the enemy. He proceeded to the tower, and held a secret conference with his brother, soon after which they both left the fort together, and did not return until the invaders were out of sight. The conduct of the ensign subjected him to some censure at the time—indeed, it needs an explanation at the present day.

Hearing that his ensign had deserted his station, which was too commanding not to be properly occupied, Capt. Snyder immediately took charge of the men, who rendered good services by their skill as marksmen.—*Becker, Van Dyck, and Warner.*

The enemy, when fired upon, filed off, the regulars, under Johnson, to the west, and the Indians, under Brant, to the east. The former crossed the flats, between the fort and the river, and did not halt until after they had passed Foxes creek, *below the old saw-mill*. They were several times fired upon from a block-house, upon that side, which mounted a six-pounder, charged with grape and canister, but with what effect is unknown. Most of the Indians crossed Foxes creek in a body, but a few stragglers lingered to burn buildings. The wood-work of Tunis Swart's tavern, the present residence of Lodowick Fries, was burned. The parsonage, which stood some twenty rods east of the present one, was not consumed. A house now standing on a knoll some thirty rods southeast of the church, was occupied in 1780 by the widow of Domine Schuyler, and one of her sons. It was erected one and a half stories, with a gambrel roof, but was altered to its present form after the war. About the time Swart's dwelling was fired, an Indian was seen approaching this house with a fire-brand. Several rifles were instantly discharged at him from the tower, and he sprang behind the trunk of an apple-tree, which is still to be seen. Five balls struck the tree as he sprang behind it. No more was seen of the Indian, who abandoned the attempt to burn the house.—*Nicholas Warner and Jacob Becker.* This apple-tree has an antiquated look, stands alone, and I really hope that the

"Woodman" will "spare that tree!"

I have said Col. Johnson halted after crossing Foxes creek. Preparations were now made to give the Americans a passing salute—the gun carriage was screwed together, and the gun placed upon it. At this time it was supposed by the men in the tower, from the ease with which the gun was carried and the manner of its transportation in a wagon, to be a “*peeled log*,” placed with the design of frightening its inmates to surrender the fort. On applying the linstock it twice flashed, and the Americans were the more confirmed in their opinion that the foe was “playing possum”—but the third application of the match was followed by a peal of war’s thunder, which sent a ball through one side of the roof of the church, and lodged it in a heavy rafter on the opposite side. The shock jarred the whole building. A second discharge of the enemy’s gun lodged a ball in the purlin-plate; and the hole made by its entrance is visible at the present day.—*Jacob Becker, and Cyrus Clark, corroborated by others.\**

While the enemy were discharging their cannon, rum sweetened with gun-powder was carried round in a pail to the soldiers, by Mrs. Snyder, to divest them of fear. This was a common beverage in former times, when hostile armies were about to conflict. The liquor was thought to embolden, while the powder maddened the warrior. As she presented the glass to the soldiers at the pickets, the hands of some trembled so as scarcely to hold it.—*Peter M. Snyder.*

While the enemy were firing on the church, an Indian crept behind an elm tree on the bank of the creek northwest of it, and lodged three rifle balls in the tower. They struck nearly in the same spot over head, but the first two were not buried sufficiently deep to remain, and fell upon the deck, one of which was taken up by John Kneiskern, but found it too hot to be retained. By removing part of the paling, a rifle was brought to bear on the

\* Not many years ago, a new covering was put upon the church by Mr. Clark, who states that the cannon shot lodged in the western plate in 1780, was then taken out and presented to John Gebhard, Esq. of Schoharie; and the one from the rafter to P. M. Snyder, in consequence of the intrepidity of Snyder’s mother when the balls were lodged. This relic was presented the writer by Mr. Snyder in 1837. It weighs a little over six pounds.

presumptuous foe. As he showed part of his face, to try a fourth shot, a marksman planted a bullet in the tree near his head, when he decamped in hot haste.—*Jacob Becker, and Jacob Van Dyck.*

The enemy made but a short stay near the Lower fort. Brant, after burning the tavern and out building of Jacob Snyder, and those of some other citizens along Foxes creek, came into the river road a few rods north west of the *Brick House* of Capt. Mann. This house was two stories in the Revolution, but was razed a story some time after. Brant was joined on the rise of ground above Mann's, by the regulars under Johnson, who made a little show of giving another salute; but a shower of rifle balls from the church tower, with several successive and well directed discharges of grape-shot, from the block-house in the north east corner of the inclosure, caused him to move down the valley. A dwelling and grist mill standing near the fort, (where those of Griggs now are,) were set on fire, but extinguished after the enemy left. The barn and other out buildings were consumed.—*P. M. Snyder, Maj. P. Vrooman and Jacob Becker.*

Whether the enemy sustained any loss in their attack on the Lower fort is unknown. If any had been killed, their bodies were no doubt consumed in some of the burning buildings in Kneiskern's dorf.

At an interview with Jacob Enders, the soldier previously mentioned, he related the following incident. After the enemy began to move down the valley, he left the fort to hang upon his rear. Discovering an Indian, he followed him along the creek toward the river, until he got a shot at him. He had on a large *pack*, and over one shoulder hung a *goose*, he had recently killed. When Enders fired, the Indian fell upon his knees, and dropped his pack and goose; then springing upon his feet, he set off on a moderate trot toward the river. Enders pursued until the Indian turned and raised his rifle on him, when he halted to load, and the Indian without firing, again ran off. After pursuing until he was exposed to the fire of others of the enemy, Enders gave over the chase. On arriving where he had left the pack and goose, he found that John Rickard, a fellow soldier, who had

seen the spoils abandoned from his position in the block-house, had been there and taken them to the fort. Enders claimed them, but Rickard would not give them up, or any part of them. The pack contained *eight pairs of new mocasons*.

On the day Schoharie was burned, three soldiers, Abraham Bergh, Jacob Kneiskern, and one Grenadare, with several other persons, were returning to the Lower fort with three head of fat cattle for that garrison; and on arriving near the present residence of Daniel Larkin, they discovered the advance of the enemy, and drove the cattle into the adjoining woods. The citizens made good their retreat, and the soldiers secreted themselves to watch the motions of the enemy. They observed a small party of Indians approach Mercle's place, on the Ferry road. The trio succeeded in getting within gun shot of the party, and as the latter were at a pump, fired upon them, killing one of their number with a buckshot. The Americans then made good their retreat, and reached the fort in safety.—*David, a son of Abr. Bergh.*

Having executed his mission in Schoharie so far as he found it practicable, Sir John Johnson encamped for the night near Harman Sidney's, the present residence of John C. Van Vechten, nearly six miles north of the Lower fort. A noble deer confined in a pen at Sidney's, which he was fattening with no little care for his own use, was killed and feasted on by the enemy. Some soldiers at work for its owner a few days before, wanted to kill the animal then, but he chose to reserve it for another occasion. In the morning, Col. Johnson sank his mortar and shells in a morass, and directed his course to Fort Hunter. One of the shells was recovered some weeks open in mud knee deep; and on being broken open it was found to contain dry powder, which was divided among the victors.—*Col. Deitz, William Becker, and Jacob Enders.*

After Sir John Johnson passed the Lower fort, George Meriness was despatched to Albany by Maj. Becker, with intelligence of his invasion, and success in Schoharie.—*William Snyder.*

That beautiful valley, on the evening after the invasion, presented a most gloomy picture. Ruin and desolation followed in the train of the foe, and many a man who had risen in the morn-



ing in *comfortable*, if not in *affluent* circumstances, found himself in the evening *houseless*, and almost ruined in property. His barns and barracks which the morning light had disclosed well filled with the rich reward of his season's labors, were so many heaps of smouldering ruins. His cattle, horses and swine, which had grazed "upon a thousand hills," either lay dead in the adjoining fields, or had been taken by the ravagers: while some of his fences had been burned and others demolished. Thus was revenged the destruction of the Indian possessions in the Chemung and Genesee valleys the year before by Gen. Sullivan; which, had they a historian, would be found a no less gloomy picture. Scarcely a log house at that early day was to be seen in the Schoharie valley: the dwellings were mostly good framed buildings, well finished and some of them painted. But here and there a building, from some cause, escaped the devouring element, to render the general ruin the more obvious. The dwelling of Peter Rickard was set on fire, and after the enemy had left it, an old negro, owned by John Lawyer, went to it from his concealment in the woods near, found a quantity of milk on the premises, and with that extinguished the flames. The house of one of his neighbors was also set on fire and put out.—*Andrew Loucks*. It is possible one or two other houses may have escaped the general conflagration under somewhat similar circumstances. Several families residing on the uplands, east of the Court House, remained at home *undisturbed by the enemy*.—*Eleanor, widow of Nicholas Feeck*.

Henry Haines, jr., of New Dorlach, who was with the enemy in the Schoharie valley, on the evening after its conflagration, arrived at the Lower fort, and enquired for John Rickard, his half brother, who was a whig. Haines had burned his feet so badly in plundering a building on fire, that he could not travel; and claimed the sympathy of his kinsman. Rickard pitied the wretch and concealed him in his hut for several days under lock and key, to keep him from the revenge of his injured fellow countrymen: allowing him, possibly, to pick the bones of Enders' goose.—*Peggy Ingold, corroborated*.

## CHAPTER XIV.

On the morning of October 18th, Col. Vrooman, collecting what troops could be spared from the three forts, pursued the retreating foe. He hung upon his rear all the way to the Mohawk valley, and by a timely movement circumscribed his burning footsteps.—*Jacob Becker, Nicholas Warner, and David Zeh.*

The fire and smoke of the burning buildings in the lower part of Schoharie, fifteen or twenty miles distant, were distinctly seen at the residence of Cornelius Putman, on the Schoharie, about a mile from its junction with the Mohawk.—*Peter, a son of Cornelius Putman, who lives on the paternal farm.*

On the following morning, Victor, a son of Cornelius Putman, and Garret, a son of Cornelius Newkirk, proceeded on horseback from the vicinity of Fort Hunter in the direction of Schoharie, to discover the cause of the light seen the previous afternoon, and learn if a foe was approaching the Mohawk. They fell in with the enemy's advance on the *Oak Ridge*, a few miles from their last encampment, retreated, were hotly pursued, and Newkirk made captive. The timely return of his companion, however, who borrowed a horse of William Hall, a pioneer settler, (having been obliged to abandon his own,) enabled several families in the neighborhood to make good their escape, or guard against surprise and capture.

At this period dwellings had been erected by Richard Hoff and Marcus Hand, on the west side of the Schoharie, some four miles from Fort Hunter, in the present town of Glen. Those houses were plundered and burnt by the Indians under Brant. The family of Hoff escaped captivity by flight, and Hand was in Florida at the time.

Cornelius Putman removed his family into the woods, and secreted a part of his most valuable effects before the enemy appeared in sight. His neighbors, Cornelius and John Newkirk, brothers, who lived on the east side of the river, also secreted a part of their property, and their families escaped, except William, a son of the latter, and three or four slaves, who had lingered a little too long at the house, and were captured. The enemy did not fire any buildings in the valley, until they had been there some time. Putman, after securing his effects, secreted himself, with a loaded gun, near his house, and saw the first Indian enter upon his premises. He went into the barn and brought out his arms full of tobacco (most of the farmers then raised a patch of the plant) which he laid down and began twisting into suitable hanks; and as often as made, thrust into his blanket above the belt which encircled his waist. Putman several times drew up his gun to fire on the Indian, but when he reflected that he would doubtless be pursued, and his flight might lead not only to his own, but to the death of his family, and the destruction or plunder of his concealed property, he desisted from firing. From his retreat, however, he watched the motions of the enemy for hours. A party entered his house, and among the spoils brought from the cellar a keeler full of eggs, which they took to the kitchen, a little building detached from the dwelling, where they made a fire, boiled, and divided them. He saw them rob his bee-hives, and a part of the robbers sit down and feast upon the dainty product of the insect's labor. Soon after this a gun was fired, which was the signal for applying the incendiary torch, and one of the party, in Putman's presence, after swinging a fire-brand several times over his head until it blazed, applied it to the well-filled barns which were soon in flames. The house was set on fire, and several of the party fired their guns into a number of stacks and barracks of grain near, and all were soon reduced to a heap of ruins. The dwellings and out-buildings of the Newkirk's were also set on fire at the given signal, and soon shared the same fate.—*Peter Putman, Ab'm V., son of Victor Putman, and John, son of Marcus Hand.*

The family of Putman had crossed the river, and with the Newkirk families was on its way to Fort Hunter, when the enemy in a body appeared in sight, at which time several hundred of the Indians and tories were seen riding Schoharie horses. The fugitives then concealed themselves in the woods, at which place the ashes blown from John Newkirk's barn and barracks, completely covered them. Putman, very fortunately, had a large stack of peas out of sight from his house, which escaped the conflagration, and enabled him, by an exchange of peas for rye, which he made at Claverack, to provide his family with bread the next season. On the west side of the river, a little distance above Putman, dwelt Harmanus and Peter H. Mabee, brothers. A short time previous to this invasion they had removed to Rotterdam. Many of their effects were left in their dwellings, which, with their well-filled barns and barracks, shared the same fate as those of their neighbors. One of the Mabees had seven large fat hogs, in a pen near the house, which were all killed by the enemy, and left in the pen. They were killed with a pitchfork taken from Putman's barn, being all stabbed with it between the eyes. Putman had several large hogs in a pen, which he let out before the enemy arrived. They were yet round the pen when the first Indian appeared, but had fortunately found a place of concealment before the destructives were ready to slay them.—*Peter Putman.*

The citizens of Cadaughrity built temporary huts next day, and erected log dwellings soon after, in which they passed the winter. Leaving the Schoharie valley the enemy entered that of the Mohawk. They avoided Fort Hunter, from which they were fired upon, approaching no nearer to it in a body, than the present residence of Richard Hudson, distant half a mile or more. At the latter place there resided a German named Schrembling, who, although a tory, chanced to be outside of his house, and being unknown, was killed and scalped; his family were however left undisturbed. The enemy, after taking a few women and children prisoners, among whom were Mrs. Peter Martin, (whose husband was then a merchant in Quebec,) proceeded up the Mo-

hawk. Soon after the invasion of Johnson, a small block-house was erected on the land of Cornelius Putman, which was also under the management of Capt. Tremper.—*Peter Putman.*

At Martin's, the Indians obtained a two horse iron-shod wagon, a vehicle rarely seen in those days, and a horse which, with a pack-horse, was harnessed before it. Mrs. Martin and her two boys, Barney and Jeremiah, after seeing their house burnt and all their property destroyed, were put into the wagon with several scullions and a quantity of baggage; among which were a few pans of honey from Putman's. The party proceeded up the valley as far as the present residence of George J. E. Lasher, (just below the Nose, and known on the Erie canal as the Willow Basin,) where they encamped for the night; plundering and burning all the whig dwellings which had escaped former visitations of a similar character. The road was so bad at that time, that the enemy found it very difficult to get along with the wagon, and finally abandoned it near the present village of Fultonville. It was unloaded, filled with rails from an adjoining fence, and set on fire; the iron-work was afterwards recovered. Jeremiah Martin, then only four or five years old, was eating honey in the wagon unconscious of danger, and on leaving it, was literally covered with the vegetable nectar from head to foot. The prisoners, around whom was placed a guard of British soldiers to prevent the Canadian Indians from murdering them, suffered from the cold that night, and the following morning, Johnson, learning that troops were on their way from Albany and Schenectada to attack him, gave Mrs. Martin and her children permission to return, which liberty was gratefully received; they were, however, plundered of some of their clothing.—*Jeremiah Martin.*

On the evening of the 18th, Gen. Robert Van Rensselaer of Claverack, with a body of the Claverack, Albany and Schenectada militia, and about two hundred Oneida Indians under Col. John Harper, in pursuit of the enemy, encamped on the hill near the Stanton place, in the present town of Florida, perhaps fifteen miles east of Johnson's encampment.—*John Ostrom, who was a*



*soldier present.\** Learning at this place that Fort Paris in Stone Arabia, about twenty miles north-west from the American camp, was to be attacked the following morning, Gen. Van Rensselaer sent a note to Col. John Brown, its gallant commander, to turn out and head the enemy at nine o'clock, and he would fall upon their rear. Sir John passed along the foot of the mountain and crossed the river on the morning of the 19th, at Keator's rift, near Spraker's Basin, and leaving the river above the Nose, a large part of his forces marched towards Stone Arabia. Col. Brown, a braver man than whom bore not a commission in the continental service, left his little fortress and led his men to attack the foe. After marching some distance from the fort, he thought it possible he might be killed or captured, and lest the letter of Gen. Van Rensselaer should fall into the hands of the enemy, he dispatched a messenger with it to the fort. As this letter could not afterwards be found at the fort, it was conjectured, that possibly the bearer had acted the *traitor*, and borne it directly to the enemy, as the greater part of his forces united soon after the firing began between Brown and the advance.—*Jacob Becker.*

Gen. Van Rensselaer, who had an effective force nearly double that of the enemy, put his army in motion at the moon's rising. Near Fort Hunter, where he arrived before day-light and was joined by the Schoharie militia: the wrong road was taken for some little distance, when Gen. V. R. uttered expressions his officers thought unbecoming his station. The American commander arrived at Keator's rift soon after the enemy had passed it, but instead of crossing the river and seconding the movement of Col. Brown as he had agreed, and as a brave and prudent officer would have done, he remained upon the south side, where news was brought him by a fugitive from Brown's command, that the latter officer, with many of his men, was slain. Fort Paris was three miles north of the Mohawk, and yet Brown met the enemy nearly two-thirds of the way to the river, where the contest began. Overpowered by numbers he continued the conflict, slowly re-

\* *Col. Stone* erroneously states the place of Van Rensselaer's encampment, on the night in question, to have been at Van Epps's.

treating, expecting every moment to hear the firing in the enemy's rear—but in vain. And contesting the ground inch by inch for some distance, he at length fell a martyr to freedom, and his blood, with that of more than thirty of his brave followers dyed the fertile fields of Stone Arabia. What loss the enemy sustained in this engagement is unknown, but as they were better sheltered by fences and trees than were the Americans, and were enabled to outflank, and had nearly surrounded them when Brown fell, it is supposed their loss was not as great.—*John Ostrom, and Jacob Becker.*

The following particulars, in addition to those above, were obtained in November, 1843, from Maj. *Joseph Spraker*, of Palatine. Col. Brown left Fort Paris (so called after Maj. Paris,) a little distance north of where the Stone Arabia churches now stand, on the morning of his death, with a body of levies and militia; and as he passed Fort Keyser, a little stockade, at which a small stone dwelling was inclosed—perhaps a mile south of Fort Paris, and about two miles distant from the river—he was joined by a few militiamen there assembled, making his effective force from 150 to 200 men. He met the enemy nearly half way from Fort Keyser to the river. They were discovered on the opposite side of a field which contained some under-brush, and which was partly skirted by a forest. As the Indians were observed behind a fence on the opposite side of the field, Capt. Casselman remonstrated with Brown against his leaving the covert of the fence; but the hero, less prudent on this occasion than usual, ordered his men into the field, and they had hardly begun to cross it, before a deadly fire was opened upon them; which was returned with spirit but far less effect, owing to the more exposed condition of the Americans. Brown maintained his position for a time, but seeing the Indians gaining his flank, he ordered a retreat; about which time, (nearly 10 o'clock, A. M.,) he received a musket ball through the breast. The enemy pressed on in such overpowering numbers, as to render it impossible for his men to bear off his body, and the brave colonel was left to his fate.

At the fall of their commander, some of the Americans fled to-

ward the Mohawk, and others north into the forest. Two of them took refuge in the dwelling of the late Judge Jacob Eacker, in the hope of defending themselves, but the house was surrounded by a party of Indians, who set it on fire, and laughed at the shrieks of its inmates who perished in the flames.

None of the citizens who were not in the battle, it is believed, were either killed or captured, they having gained one of the two forts, or sought safety in the woods.

John Zielie, a captain of militia, had charge of Fort Keyser on that day. Geo. Spraker, father of informant, and John Waffle, elderly men, Joseph and Conrad Spraker, William Waffle, Warner Dygert, and possibly one or two other young men, were all who were ready to aid Capt. Z. in the defence of his little fortress, when the British regulars passed near it in column, soon after Brown's engagement. It might easily have fallen into their hands, had they known the number of its defenders. The few men in it were, however, at the port holes, each with his gun and a hat full of cartridges by his side, although its commandant restrained their firing from motives of policy. Informant had two older brothers under Col. Brown, who effected their escape after he fell.

Soon after the enemy were out of sight, the four young men named, proceeded in the direction the firing had been heard, and leaping a fence into the fatal field, Joseph Spraker stood beside the mangled remains of the brave, ill-fated Brown. His scalp had been taken off so as completely to remove all the hair on his head: this was unusual, as only the crown scalp was commonly taken, but knowing his distinction and prowess, we may justly infer the red man's motive. He was stripped of every article of his clothing, except a ruffled shirt. The four young militiamen took the body of their fallen chief, and bore it in their arms to Fort Keyser. The remains of the soldiers who fell in this battle were all buried in one pit, and Col. Brown with them, but a day or two after it was opened and his remains removed to a place of interment near the churches. Col. Brown was of middling stature, with dark eyes and a fine military countenance: he usually

wore glasses. He was agreeable and urbane in his manners, but possessed a spirit when in danger, fearless as the dashing cataract. He fell deeply lamented by his numerous friends, and the few silver-haired heroes of his acquaintance who still survive, are enthusiastic in his praise.

Col. Brown was a native of Massachusetts, and was born Oct. 19th, 1744. On the 19th day of Oct., 1836, *fifty-six years after his death*, arrangements having been made for the occasion, a monument was erected over his remains in the presence of a large assemblage of respectable citizens of the county, convened to honor the ashes of a hero. The monument was reared at the expense of Henry Brown, Esq., of Berkshire, Mass., a son of the warrior, who, I regret to add, has since deceased. The following is the monumental inscription :

“In Memory of Col. John Brown,  
who was killed in battle on the 19 day of October, 1780,  
at Palatine, in the county of Montgomery,  
Æ. 36.”

After the ceremony of raising the monument, a sermon was preached by the Rev. Abraham Van Horne, of Caughnawaga, and a very patriotic address delivered by G. L. Roof, Esq., of Canajoharie: portions of which I have been kindly furnished by the author. The following is an extract from that address:

“Col. Brown fell in battle on the 19th day of October, 1780; the very day he reached the age of *thirty-six*, so that the anniversary of his birth was also the day of his death. But though he fell thus early in life, and before he had filled the measure of his fame, yet his deeds of bravery and patriotism will not be forgotten by posterity; and the name of BROWN will, for ages to come, be held in grateful remembrance. His was that bravery, that quailed not before tyranny, and that feared not death. His was that patriotism that nerves the arm of the warrior battling for the liberties of his country, and leads him on to the performance of deeds of glory.”

The forces of Col. Johnson, a part of which had crossed the river near Caughnawaga, destroyed all the Whig property, not only on the south, but on the north side, from Fort Hunter to the Nose: and in several instances where dwellings had been burned

by the Indians under his command in May, and temporary ones rebuilt, they were also consumed. Of the latter number was that of Barney Wemple. After his dwelling was burnt in May, he went to Tribe's Hill, tore down a tory dwelling, and erected it upon the ruins of his former one.—*Rynier Gardinier*.\* After Brown fell, the enemy, scattered in small bodies, were to be seen in every direction plundering and burning the settlements in Stone Arabia. In the afternoon, Gen. Van Rensselaer, after being warmly censured for his delay by Col. Harper and several other officers, crossed the river at Fort Plain, and began the pursuit in earnest. The enemy were overtaken on the north side of the river above St. Johnsville, near a stockade and block-house at Klock's, just before night, and a smart brush took place between the British troops and the Americans under Col. Duboise; in which, several

\* On the morning of the day on which the Stone Arabian battle was fought Fred. H. Dockstader, who lived on the "Sand Flats" in the present town of Mohawk, having seen the fires along the river, concealed his family and personal effects in the woods, and then approached the Mohawk valley to gain a view of passing events; thinking the enemy would confine their movements to the river settlements. As he was about to gain the desired position, he was surprised to see a party of Indians approaching him. He walk boldly up, and addressing them with confidence assured them he was their friend, and on his way to meet them. They proceeded with him to his house, and after laying him under contribution in the way of plunder, left him and his buildings unharmed. Before leaving, they took several of his horses, one of which was a favorite, although he dared not protest against their taking it. This party of the enemy burned the house of F. H. Dockstader's brother, within sight of his own, and left a war club in a conspicuous place; as much as to say, we will kill the proprietor if we can catch him.

A pleasing incident occurred at Dockstader's, illustrative of the red man's character. One of the Indians caught a colt that had never been rode, and with his belt and some cords made a kind of bridle which he put upon its head. The colt stood still until the Indian mounted with a bundle of plunder in one hand and his rifle in the other, seemingly delighted with his new master; but as soon as he had made ready to set forward, and struck his heels against the animal, it dashed onward and reared several times, sending the Indian heels over head upon the ground in one direction, and his rifle and duds in another. Thus rid of his load, the colt stopped and looked back to witness the plight of the rider. The rest of the Indians laughed as though their sides would split, and Dockstader, who dared not laugh, expected to see the Indian rise and shoot the animal; but instead of doing so, he sullenly gained his feet—picked up his portable wealth, and moved off amid the merry jeers of his companions.—*Henry F., son of Fred. H. Dockstader.*



on each side were killed or wounded. Johnson was compelled to retreat to a peninsula in the river, where he encamped with his men much wearied. His situation was such that he could have been taken with ease. Col. Duboise, with a body of levies, took a station above him to prevent his proceeding up the river ; Gen. Van Rensselaer, with the main army, below : while Col. Harper, with the Oneida Indians, gained a position on the south side of the river, nearly opposite. The general gave express orders that the attack should be renewed by the troops under his own immediate command, at the rising of the moon, some hour in the night. Instead, however, of encamping on the ground from which the enemy had been driven, as a brave officer would have done, he fell back down the river and encamped three miles distant. The troops under Duboise and Harper could hardly be restrained from commencing the attack long before the moon arose ; but when it did, they waited with almost breathless anxiety to hear the rattle of Van Rensselaer's musketry. The enemy, who encamped on lands owned by the late Judge Jacob G. Klock, spiked their cannon, which was there abandoned ; and soon after the moon appeared, began to move forward to a fording place just above the residence of Nathan Christie, and not far from their encampment. Many were the denunciations made by the men under Duboise and Harper against Van Rensselaer, when they found he did not begin the attack, and had given strict orders that their commanders should not. They openly stigmatised the general as a *coward* and *traitor* ; but when several hours had elapsed, and he had not yet made his appearance, a murmur of discontent pervaded all. Harper and Duboise were compelled to see the troops under Johnson and Brant ford the river and pass off *unmolested*, or disobey the orders of their commander, when they could, *unaided*, have given them most advantageous battle. Had those brave colonels, at the moment the enemy were in the river, taken the responsibility of disobeying their commander as Murphy had done three days before, and commenced the attack in front and rear, the consequences must have been very fatal to the retreating army, and the death of Col. Brown and his men promptly revenged.—*Jacob Becker, a Schoharie militiaman.*

Garret Newkirk, the prisoner who was captured on his way to Schoharie, effected his escape the second night after, and returned home unmolested. As if to cap the climax of Gen. Van Rensselaer's management, he had sent an express to Fort Schuyler; from whence, Capt. Walter Vrooman\* (the same mentioned as being at the Johnstown fort in May preceding,) was dispatched with a company of fifty men to Oneida lake, to destroy the enemy's concealed boats. Col. Johnson, informed of the movement, as supposed, through the treachery of one of Vrooman's men, surprised and captured the entire command.

It was confidently asserted in the American army, that some relationship by marriage existed between Gen. Van Rensselaer and Sir John Johnson, which induced the former to favor the escape of the latter.—*Becker and Ostrom.*

The Americans took two nine pounders from Schenectada, which were left at Fort Plain. So much dallying took place on the part of the commanding officer, that the enemy, although pursued some distance on the south side of the river, were not prevented from making their escape. At a small block-house and

\* Soon after Capt. Vrooman, who was a large muscular man, (as brave as strong,) was taken, an Indian, claiming him as his prisoner, fastened to his shoulders a heavy pack, which he compelled him to carry. Those Indian packs were usually made of striped linsey petticoats, stolen from frontier settlers: such was the one, filled with plunder made in Stone Arabia, imposed on Capt. Vrooman. He had not borne it far, before he was observed by Col. Johnson, who enquired why he carried it? He replied that an Indian had placed it upon him. The colonel then drew his sword and severed its fastenings. In a short time, the owner of the pack, who was in the rear at the time it fell, came up, and in anger replaced it, with a threat of death if he did not continue to carry it. It had been restored but a little while, when Sir John again observed the American captain (who was a fine specimen of the early Dutch,) under the ungainly load, and once more cut its bands; placing a guard around him to prevent his receiving any injury or insult from the red warrior. In a few minutes, the latter reappeared with uplifted tomahawk, threatening vengeance; but finding his approach to the prisoner prevented by bristling bayonets, he sullenly fell back: he, however, continued to watch for a favorable opportunity all the way to Canada, to execute his threat. While crossing a rapid stream on a log shortly after, this Indian fell off with his pack on, and would have been drowned, but for the timely aid of his comrades. On arriving at Montreal, Capt. Vrooman was incarcerated in prison and did not see the sun again for two long years.—*Volkert Voorhees.*

stockade between Fort Plain and Fort Herkimer, called Fort Windecker, after a German, near whose house it was erected, (which house stood just above Crouse's Lock, on the Erie Canal,) seven men and a boy killed an Indian and took nine prisoners, several of whom, worn out with constant exertions, purposely surrendered. They stated that if the Americans had followed up their advantages, Johnson and most of his men must have been captured. Forty or fifty horses belonging to citizens of Schoharie were recovered, and either taken back by the soldiers at this time, or reclaimed in the Mohawk valley the following winter, by some half a dozen men who went from Schoharie on purpose.—*Jacob Becker and David Zeh.*

In the pursuit of Johnson from Schoharie, the militia being deficient in knapsacks, carried bread on poles. Holes being made in the loaves, a pole was passed through several, and borne between two soldiers, who also added a loaf at each end.—*Mattice Ball.*

In the summer of 1843, I obtained from John Ostrom, a worthy citizen of Glen, some additional particulars relating to this invasion. Mr. Ostrom was a militiaman under Gen. Van Rensselaer, in the pursuit of Sir John Johnson. When the Americans arrived at the Nose, on the enemy's trail in the morning, Col. Brown was then engaged with the latter not two miles distant, and they heard the firing, but made no attempt to cross the river where the enemy had crossed. When the skirmish took place between Col. Duboise and Col. Johnson, the reason assigned by Gen. Van Rensselaer, for not following up the success gained, and leading his men to the attack, was, its being so near night. Henry Ostrom, a captain of militia, from the vicinity of Albany, and father of informant, to whose company the latter was attached; surprised at the indifference of the general, asked him if he did not intend to prosecute the attack. He replied that it was so near night his men would not march. Capt. Ostrom, still remonstrating with his commander, for what he considered a neglect of duty, finally received orders to lead his own men forward; which he did with promptness, to the surprise of the general, who, having

mistaken his mettle, countermanded the order after the company had proceeded several rods. Why Van Rensselaer chose to fall back down the river *three miles to encamp*, remains among the mysteries of the past.

Capt. Duncan, an officer under Sir John Johnson, in this invasion, returned after the war closed to the residence of his father, situated a few miles from Schenectada. His return having been kept private for a little time, he invited in several of his former acquaintances, some of whom he had opposed in arms, of which number was Capt. Ostrom. On this occasion he informed his guests, while speaking of Johnson's invasion now under consideration, that after the skirmish with Col. Duboise, the British officers held a consultation, at which it was agreed to surrender the whole army, worn out with fatigues as it was, *prisoners of war*; but that General Van Rensselaer *did not give them a chance*. Capt. Duncan finding himself kindly treated by his old neighbors, remained in the state.

But to return to the Schoharie valley which we left in ruins. Fearing an invasion, considerable grain had been stacked in the woods and by-places remote from dwellings the preceding harvest, in the hope that if he did appear, *possibly* those stacks might escape the fire-brand. Andrew Loucks had two stacks thus concealed, as had also Chairman Ball, which were not burnt. Loucks had very fortunately let out his hogs to live on acorns, and they, too, were spared. Some individuals lost at this time from eight to ten horses, comparatively few of which were recovered. Mr. Ball lost nine.—*Andrew Loucks and Peter Ball*.

On his return to the Middle fort, Col. Vrooman found himself once more its lawful commander, Maj. Woolsey having taken French leave during his absence. Col. Vrooman was often from home on public business during the winter months of the war; and sometime after the destruction of Schoharie—being a member of the state legislature, he went to Poughkeepsie, where it was about to convene. Among other members, Col. Vrooman was an invited guest at an evening party. On his arrival at the place of mirth, almost the first person who caught his eye was

Maj. Woolsey. He laid off his loose clothing, and very soon after sought an interview with his *military friend*, but to his surprise, he found the latter had suddenly left the house; nor did he reappear that night. Recollecting their last interview near the magazine, he possibly did not care about meeting the Dutch colonel.—*Angelica Vrooman*.

Where now stands the dwelling, so long known as *Spraker's Tavern* on the Mohawk turnpike, stood a small house in the Revolution owned by one of the Tribes' Hill Bowens, and occupied by John Van Loan—whose politics were of a suspicious character. On a certain occasion, two tories, *Albert Van De Warken*, and a man named *Frazee* entered the settlement in the character of *spies*, and were traced to the dwelling of Van Loan; where they were concealed in the daytime. A small party of patriots having assembled under Capt. John Zielie for the occasion, approached the house one evening to kill or capture the emissaries of the enemy; and discovered them through a window at supper. Becoming apprised by some means of the proximity of armed men, the spies found means to leave the house and flee to a barrack of hay, which stood between that and the hill. Around the barrack Capt. Zielie stationed his men to prevent the escape of the fugitives, and await the return of day. As light began to dawn, the rascals sprang from their concealment and ran at the top of their speed. Frazee, in attempting to pass Adam Empie, a soldier present, was thrust through with a bayonet and killed; while his comrade, more fortunate, although a volley of bullets whistled around him, fled up the mountain and escaped.

The tory dwelling above mentioned, was burnt by the enemy under Sir John Johnson, who crossed the river a few rods below it, on the morning Col. Brown fell; from what motive is unknown.—*Joseph Spraker*.

When the war of the Revolution commenced, three brothers, William, John, and Philip Crysler, who lived in new Dorlach; with their brother Adam, who lived in Schoharie, took up arms with the foes of their country, and went to Canada in 1777. As it began to be doubted by many of the tories in 1780, whether



Britain could subdue the states, Philip, whose family still lived in New Dorlach, and who desired to remove it to Canada, had a party assigned him near Harpersfield to aid in its removal. It is supposed they arrived near the settlement a day or two before the army reached Schoharie; and were concealed until Seth's Henry and possibly some others met them in an appointed place, and communicated intelligence of the proceedings in Schoharie, that the movement of Crysler's destructives should not precede the general irruption. However that may be, it is certain Seth's Henry, who was at the burning of Schoharie, was on the following day also of the hostile party in New Dorlach.

The enemy, consisting of eighteen Indians and three Tories, made their appearance just after noon at the dwelling of Michael Merckley,\* where Hiram Sexton now resides. Merckley was at this time a widower. His family consisted of three daughters, three sons, and a lad named Fox. The daughters were all young women; one was married to Christopher Merckley, and lived in Rhinebeck, a small settlement a few miles from New Dorlach—the other two were at home. The oldest son had gone to Canada three years before, the second was then at Schoharie, and the youngest, a lad about thirteen years old, and Fox, a boy near his age, were also at home. Frederick, a brother of Michael Merckley, then resided less than a mile east of the latter. He had an only daughter named Catharine, who by repute was the *fairest* young lady in the Schoharie settlements. He also had several sons. Christian, (from whom some of these particulars were obtained) about seventeen years old, who was then at home; Martin, a younger brother, who had been sent to his uncle Martin's about noon of that day to borrow a currier's knife, and possibly one or two others. On arriving at Merckley's, the enemy captured his two daughters, the two boys, and their cousin Martin who chanced still to be there.

About three-fourths of a mile west of Michael Merckley, then resided Bastian France, where his son Henry now resides, a little distance from the road, which ran much as it does at the pre-

\* This name was formerly written Mercle, and pronounced Mericle.

sent day. As the country was new, however, it was shaded more by trees, and not bounded by fences as at present. Mr. France had eight children. His two oldest sons, young men, had gone to Schoharie on the 17th, to learn how matters stood in that valley, and were in the Lower fort when the enemy passed it. Christopher, the oldest of those brothers, (who was the first white child born in the town of Seward,) and Miss Catharine Merckley, had plighted hymenial vows, *and were to have been married two weeks from the day of her death.* Four other sons were at home—John, fourteen years old, Henry, thirteen, and two younger : and two daughters—Betsey, a young lady of seventeen, and a little girl perhaps ten years of age. At the road, near the residence of France, resided Henry Haines, a tory. West creek, a tributary of Cobelskill, passed near his house, and on this he had erected a small grist-mill—the first erected in the town of Seward. Philip Hoffman, an old gentleman, lived not far from Haines, where Klock now resides.

Mr. Merckley, at whose house the Indians first appeared, had been to visit his married daughter at Rhinebeck settlement, as had also Catharine Merckley and Betsey France, all on horseback. Mr. Merckley returned home but a little in advance of the girls, and approaching his house he discovered the Indians about the door, but conscious of his kind feelings towards them, and zeal in the royal cause, while in the act of dismounting from his horse with perfect unconcern, he was shot down, killed, and scalped. It was at his house, it will be remembered, the party were harbored who captured his neighbor, William Hynds, and family, the preceding July. When the girls approached his mill, Haines came out, and addressing Catharine, enquired, "*What is the news?*" The reply was, "*Betsey will tell you ; I am in a great hurry to get home.*" Miss France had reined up just above the mill, to cross the creek, between the road and her father's dwelling, as her beautiful companion rode forward, evidently excited from some cause, to meet her impending fate. Possibly she had heard the gun fired at her uncle, and anticipated danger. She had but little more than a mile to go after parting with her

young friend. The road, by a bend from Haines' mill, swept along the verge of a rise of ground on the north side of West creek, leaving the flats southwest of the road. The ground is elevated in front of the Merckley place, and just beyond it the road turns off, nearly east, towards Hyndsville. Miss Merckley was ri-



#### MURDER OF CATHARINE MERCKLEY.

ding a noble gray horse, and as she drew near her uncle's dwelling she saw the Indians and tories about the door, several of whom called on her to stop; but her eye, no doubt, caught a view of the mangled remains of her uncle, and instead of reining, she urged her horse up the acclivity at a quick gallop. At the instant she was opposite to him, Seth's Henry leveled his rifle and fired at her, and as she did not immediately fall, he snatched a rifle from the hands of another Indian and fired again. The horse, as though conscious of danger, and the value of his burden, increased his speed, but the fatal messenger had done its errand—the lovely victim pitched forward and fell to the earth, writhing in the agonies of death.

She was shot through the body evidently by the first bullet, as it had passed in at the right side. She survived but a few minutes, and expired clasping her hands firmly upon the wound. The tragic death of this young lady, so justly celebrated for her personal charms, was witnessed from the house by her brother and cousins. Her murderer, as he tore off her bleeding scalp, struck with the beauty and regularity of her features, remarked—" *She was too handsome a pale face to kill, and had I known the squaw had such long black hair, I would not have shot her.*" The horse ran home, after losing his rider, and the bloody saddle shadowed forth the tidings her friends might expect to hear, of their dear relative's fate. The family instantly fled, and secreted themselves in the woods, where they remained until the following day.

Bastian France, who was then advanced in life, and quite infirm, was in his chamber making shoes. Hearing the firing at Merckley's, he came down and told his family (his wife was then visiting at the house of Haines near by) he felt alarmed and taking his gun, said he would go through the woods south of his house and learn the cause of disturbance. He had not gone half way to Merckley's, when he discovered several Indians proceeding directly to his own dwelling. Knowing he could not reach it before they did, he resolved to proceed on foot, by a circuitous route, to the lower Schoharie fort for assistance, distant eighteen or twenty miles, and return as soon as possible. He arrived there late in the evening, greatly fatigued, and found that all the troops which could be spared were preparing to follow the enemy to the Mohawk. It was late the following day when he again arrived at his own dwelling.

Two Indians reached the residence of France in advance of their fellows, at which time the children were standing on the stoop looking for the cause of alarm. As they approached the house, a large watch-dog ran out and attacked them, which one halted to shoot. The other approached the children and led out John and Henry, the two oldest boys at home, towards a pile of wood to be killed. As the Indian who had shot the dog came up, John was handed over to him by his captor to be murdered for the



British value of his scalp. The Indian aimed a blow with his tomahawk at his head, which the latter warded off with his arm. As the second blow which brought him to the ground was raised, Henry saw the other children running off, and followed them. Seeing his captor start in pursuit, lest he should be shot down, he sprang round a corner of the house and stood still. The Indian turned the corner and took him, with the other children, back to the stoop.

Without waiting to scalp the victim, the Indian who had felled John, left him and ran across the creek to the house of Hoffman, but the latter with his wife, having heard the gun which was fired at France's dog, took seasonable alarm, fled into the woods and escaped. As the children returned to the door with their captor, some half a dozen more of the enemy arrived; and proceeding to the cellar, helped themselves to several pies, and such other food as it contained, which they took up stairs, placed on a table in the centre of a room and greedily devoured. Mrs. France hearing the noise, hastened home to protect her children or share their fate, just as the Indians were surrounding the table. When Henry was taken back, he went to his wounded brother, who could still sit up, and attempted to raise him on his feet; but he was unable to stand. Henry then told him to crawl under the oven where the dog usually had slept, but the hatchet had done its bidding, and he was too weak. When his mother arrived at the house and beheld the situation of her dying son, who was then past speech, her maternal sympathy was aroused. Her little daughter, crying, clung to her knees and besought her *to save John from the cruel Indians*; and she in tears entreated them to carry him into the house, or spare him from further injury. This they refused to do, but promised not to harm her other children.

While his captor was eating, Henry was compelled to stand near him, by whom he was closely eyed. Twice he walked to the door, and on turning round, observed the stealthy eye of the red man fixed upon him and he walked back; he thus lulled the suspicion of his keeper, and the third time he reached the door, perceiving he was not watched, he sprang out of the house, ran



round it and fled towards the woods. When about twenty rods distant, he looked back and saw several Indians turn a corner of the house, and instantly falling to the ground he was gratified to observe, that as they scattered in pursuit, none started in the direction he had taken. From behind some old logs he watched their motions, and as soon as they had returned to the dwelling, he gained the adjoining woods in safety.

A few minutes after Henry had eluded the vigilance of his new master, the Indian who had gone to Hoffinan's returned, was quite angry because the former had escaped, and instantly dispatched and scalped John. Philip Crysler lived in the direction of Hoffman, and when the murderer returned, the former, disguised as an Indian, came with him. He was not known to the family at the time, although they observed he had *blue eyes*, (the eyes and hair of a blooded Indian are almost invariably black,) but they afterwards learned from a sister of Crysler, that his wife, hearing the gun fired at the dog of France, told her husband to put on his Indian dress, run over and save the France family by all means, as she was under such great obligations to them. They had almost wholly supported herself and family for *three years*. To the counsels of the *blue-eyed Indian*, as Crysler was called, the party reluctantly yielded; and leaving the rest of the family and most of their effects undisturbed, soon after withdrew. The Indian who had been foiled by Henry, seemed most dissatisfied; and snatching a brand of fire he ran to the barn and thrust it into the hay. Another Indian drew it out and threw it away, but some coals must have remained, as the barn and its contents were soon after in flames. Two large barracks, each an hundred feet in circumference, standing near the barn, were also consumed. Two of the Indians at the house of France could speak Low Dutch; Mrs. France begged of them to intercede for the lives of her offspring.

The invaders went as far west as the dwelling of Haines, capturing several of his slaves. Haines went to Canada himself at a subsequent period. As soon as the Indians were out of sight, Mrs. France carried the body of her murdered son into the house, his warm blood trickling upon her feet; and then, with Betsey and three younger children, concealed herself in the woods.

Henry France, after gaining the forest back of his father's house, ran, by a circuitous route, towards the dwelling of William Spurnhuyer, who resided not far from Christian Merckley. In the mean time, the enemy, with their plunder, accompanied by the family of Crysler, after burning the dwelling and barn of Michael Merckley, set forward on their journey. On arriving at the house of Spurnhuyer, who had gone with his family to a place of greater security but a day or two before, they made a halt. Spurnhuyer had left a young heifer near the dwelling, which was shot to serve the party for food. When the gun was fired at the animal, young France was not in sight, though near, but was running directly toward that place, and supposing it fired at himself, changed his course, nor did he know at what the gun was discharged, until the return of Martin Merckley, some time after. Thus had this lad a third time escaped the tomahawk. He then went back and secreted himself, about sun-down, near the creek, a few rods from his father's dwelling. He had been but a short time in this place when Mrs. Haines, who was going past with a milk-pail, discovered him in the bushes, and told him where he could find his mother. Procuring blankets at the house the weeping group returned to sleep in the woods, fearing a visit from the bears and wolves less than they did that of the armed savage. The family lived in the woods until the third day following their disaster, when they went to Schoharie.

Spurnhuyer's house, after being plundered, was set on fire, and, with his barn consumed. The invaders had proceeded only a mile or two from the settlement, when the two boys cried to return. The *executioner* of the party halted with them, and soon after overtook his comrades with their bloody scalps. Berkley, a tory present, from the vicinity of Albany, told the Misses Merckley that their brother and young Fox would not have been killed had they not cried. Indians never fancy crying children. It was not known in New Dorlach that those boys were killed, until a year or two afterwards, when the fact was communicated by a letter from the Merckley girls to their friends. Persons who visited the spot near the mountain south of their father's, designated as the

place where the boys were murdered, found bones scattered over the ground, wild beasts having no doubt eaten the flesh that once covered them. The party journeyed directly to Canada by the usual southwestern route, and as the weather was then cold, the suffering of the prisoners was very severe. They were greatly straightened for food on the way, and putrid horse-flesh, fortunately found in the path, was considered a luxury, and doubtless saved some of them from starving. Martin Merckley was compelled to run the gantlet, and was beaten and buffeted a great distance. Prisoners captured in the spring or fall, when the Indians were congregated in villages, usually suffered more than those taken in midsummer. As the Merckley girls were then orphans, and their father's personal property all destroyed, they accepted offers of marriage, and both remained in Canada.

On the day following their massacre, the remains of John France were buried by Henry Haines, Sen., and those of Mr. Merckley and his charming neice, by Mr. Haines, Michael Frimire, and Christopher France, Miss M.'s intended husband. Sad, indeed, must have been the feelings of the young lover, while performing this most melancholy duty. Few were the witnesses present; no funeral knell told the distant neighbor that death was abroad; the ceremony was brief and informal. No long procession followed those mangled corpses to measured steps, preceded by the man of God in sacerdotal robes; yet one there was whose sorrowing came from the heart. A few rough boards were laid in the "narrow house" which had been hastily dug a little distance east of where they had fallen, and blooming youth and parental age were placed side by side in it, and quicky buried. A few years ago their remains were taken up, placed in a coffin, and funeral services performed over them; after which they were deposited in the family burying ground, on the Frederick Merckley place, where a marble slab may now be seen with the following inscription:

"In Memory of Catharine Marcley and Michael Marcley,  
who was [were] killed by the Indians, Oct. 18, 1780."

Nothing on the stone indicates their ages or consanguinity: she

was about 18 ; and her uncle, probably, 45 or 50 years old. After young France was engaged to Miss Merckley, he gave her, agreeable to custom, a pair of silver shoe-buckles. These Seth's Henry left upon her feet, and they were returned to the lover.

It has been a mystery to many in Schoharie that Michael Merckley, who was the avowed friend of royalty, should thus have been killed, his property destroyed, and his family broken up. The following circumstance reveals the secret. A short time previous to the Revolution, a daughter of Philip Crysler (then in her *teens*) was living in the family of one Barnhard, in the capacity of a hired girl. While there, a son of Michael Merckley several times visited her, about which time she became *gravis*. This fact coming to the knowledge of her parents, they desired her to fix paternity on young Merckley and compel a marriage. She was taken before Judge Brown, then a justice of the peace, who, having previously been apprized of all the circumstances in the case, told the girl the nature of an oath, the criminality of its being falsely rendered, and what the future consequences might be. He then administered the oath, and the *honors* of paternity were awarded Barnhard. This affair caused a lasting hatred between the two families ; and when Crysler obtained the direction of a party of Indians, there can remain little doubt but what some of them were found willing, in anticipation of plunder, to share his prejudices and gratify his savage propensities ; for such we must call the inclinations of those who joined the enemy, went to Canada, and *from choice* came back *repeatedly*, to imbrue their hands in the blood of their former neighbors and relatives.

Many of the settlers, tories as well as whigs, concealed their effects in the war ; and it is said that Philip Crysler had concealed part of his. As old Mr. Hoffman and his wife were inoffensive people, and did not meddle with politics, it was supposed from the attempt to kill them at the time of his removal, and of their massacre the next season, that it was in consequence of the fact, that a girl, who had once lived with Hoffman, had discovered and appropriated to her own use, some of the hidden property of Crysler. Trifling circumstances were construed into plausible pre-



texts too often in the Revolution—as, in fact, they will be, from the nature of things, in all civil wars—for the perpetration of the most heinous and revolting cruelties. The reason is obvious: when all laws are disregarded and set at defiance, the baser passions of the human breast triumph over virtue and social order; and crime—

“ Stalks abroad at noonday,  
Nor does she cease at midnight to destroy.\*”

Nothing of importance transpired in the Schoharie valley that year, after the invasion of Sir John Johnson. The loss at that time to the citizens seems almost incalculable. Of the *one hundred and thirty-four* buildings, said by Judge Brown to have been burned in Schoharie county during the war, the greater part were consumed at this time. Among all the houses burnt in the county, I do not remember to have heard of a single log tenement: the citizens were comfortably situated in good framed dwellings, with large barns (which the Dutch are celebrated for erecting) abundantly filled. Schoharie had constantly supplied not only her own citizens and soldiers with wheat, but had furnished large quantities for the support of American troops at other stations: but now, by the most rigid economy, the remaining supply could hardly have been expected to subsist the citizens until new crops returned. Some families were compelled to take up temporary residences abroad, while others set about erecting such dwellings as their crippled means would allow. That the destruction of the Schoharie settlements that season was properly considered in other colonies at the time, the following extract of a letter from President Madison, dated at Philadelphia, Nov. 14, 1780, (which I find in the Albany Evening Journal of Nov. 30, 1841,) will clearly show. After alluding to the difficulty of procuring supplies of wheat and flour for the Army, he adds:

“ The inroads of the enemy on the frontiers of New York have

\* The occurrences which took place in New Dorlach were told the author in 1837, by Henry, son of Bastian France; the wife of Tunis Vrooman, and daughter of Ernest Fretz; Henry, a son of Wm. Hynds, and Christian, a son of Fred. Merckley, corroborated by others.

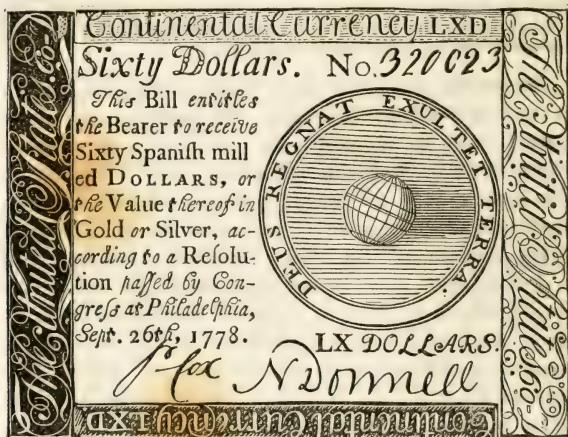


been most fatal to us in this respect. They have almost totally ruined that fine wheat country, which was able, and from the energy of their government, was likely to supply magazines of flour, both to the main army and the northwestern posts. The settlement of Schoharie, which alone was able to furnish, according to a letter from Gen. Washington, *eighty thousand bushels of grain for public use*, has been totally laid in ashes."

Nor was the great loss of grain, dwellings, stock, &c., the only one to be deplored in Schoharie. The paper currency of the country, which had increased by the year 1780 to the enormous sum of 200,000,000 dollars, had become nearly worthless. Of this trash, some of the Schoharie farmers had large amounts; mostly taken in payment for the products of the soil, for quite or nearly its pretended value. Some who had been holding on to it in the hope that it would become more valuable, or because they found it difficult as a leech to shake off, had the mortification to learn, that from *fifty to sixty dollars* continental money would command in 1780 but *one single dollar* in specie. An old soldier informed the author, that he once sent an *eight dollar* continental bill to buy a quart of cider, and received a *two dollar bill*, Rhode Island currency, in change. At a later period, an officer of his acquaintance once paid *seventy dollars* of continental money for *a single mug of flip*. At the close of the war, it could hardly have been considered of any value, except for cigar or lamp-lighters.

To give the reader an idea of the currency of which I have so often spoken, I give the facsimile of a continental note, and the vignettes of others. In selecting mottos for vignettes, care was taken to get brief Latin sentences, which should be characteristic of the position of this country with England; and would be most likely to stimulate patriotic sentiments and enlist the feelings of Americans in the popular cause. The significant devices on the bills generally proved an index to the sentiments prevailing at their date. The back of the notes contained the amount of the same, with the name and residence of the printers, and some simple device, as that of a leaf, a vine, or an Indian bow. The latter appears on the back of the note, from which the following cut

was engraved. Some of the continental notes contained water-marks, only to be seen by holding them up to the light. Many of the vignettes also contained a colored mark of some kind.



The vignette of this bill is the emblem of a globe surrounded by the motto—"THE LORD REIGNS, LET THE EARTH REJOICE." A quotation from the Psalms of David, showing the confidence of the states in the God of battles.



This device, a circular chain, bearing on each link the name of a state, is an admirable emblem of their *union*, and implies that while it remains unbroken, no foreign power can destroy its central government. This note, *Two Thirds of a Dollar*, is dated Feb. 17, 1776, and in a device upon the back is the commendable caution, "*Mind your business.*"



This is the vignette of a *Six Dollar Note*, dated Feb. 17, 1776. It represents a beaver gnawing a tree. This sagacious animal constructs its dams and dwellings, by cutting down trees with its teeth: a slow but sure process. The motto over it is—"BY PERSEVERING." Saying in effect to the colonists: persist and your labors shall be crowned with success.



This is the vignette of a *Five Dollar Note*, of New York currency, dated March 5, 1776. It represents a candlestick with *thirteen burners*, to denote the number of states. The motto signifies, "ONE FIRE AND TO THE SAME PURPOSE." Implying that the states were all alive to a sense of their just rights.



Here is the vignette of a *Five Dollar Note*, dated May 9, 1776. It shows a thorn tree, with a hand grasping it. The motto says—"SUSTAIN OR ABSTAIN." This device, at that period, represents the colonies as saying in effect to Great Britain, *Pass laws to protect, or none to affect us.*



This device, a contest between an eagle and a stork, is from a *Three Dollar Note*, dated July 22, 1776. The stork represents the colonies struggling against the superior force of the mother country. The motto encourages by saying—"THE RESULT IS UNCERTAIN."



Here is the vignette of an *Eight Dollar Note*, also dated July 22, 1776. It contains a harp, surrounded by the motto, "LARGE THINGS ARE CONSONANT WITH SMALL ONES." As the strings of a harp must all be in tune to give music ; so the states, with diversified interests and opinions, must be guided by wisdom to unite and harmonize them for the general good.



This device, on a *Half Dollar Note*, dated Aug. 13, 1776, is a most interesting and significant one. It is that of a hand planting a young tree. Its motto—"FOR POSTERITY," shows the duty of practising *disinterested benevolence* ; in struggling to establish a government which will extend its greatest benefits to future generations.



The vignette of this note for *Four Dollars*, dated Jan. 14, 1779, represents a swine encountering a spear ; and demanding, as he received it, "DEATH, OR LIFE WITH DECENCY."



This note for *Eighty Dollars* is also dated Jan. 14, 1779, and bears the device of a majestic oak tree. Around it are the words, "IT SHALL FLOURISH THROUGH AGES OF AGES." Prophetic allusion is here made to the establishment and perpetuity of a republican government. Heaven grant the prediction may be fully verified, and that the worms of faction may ever die before reaching the



roots of *liber'y's tree*: planted by oppression and nourished by the best blood of the land.



This little device, which appears on a note for *One Shilling*, New York currency, dated Aug. 13, 1776, (on which are the words, "*'Tis death to counterfeit,*") is truly expressive. It represents incense rising from an altar, and over it

the motto—"NOT WITHOUT GOD."

Many important events transpired in the United States, in 1780, to hearten or dispirit the American patriot. On the 13th day of May, Charleston, S. C., then in the command of Gen. Lincoln, fell into the hands of the British with nearly five thousand men, and four hundred cannon. In June 5000 men under Gen. Kniphausen, entered New-Jersey, and committed many acts of violence. On the 10th day of July, Admiral M. de Ternay sent by the French government, with seventeen armed vessels and several transports, arrived at Newport, R. I., bringing six thousand French troops, under the Count de Rochambeau, to aid us in our struggle for freedom. The arrival of these *allies* was greeted by the citizens with every demonstration of joy. On the 16th of August, the American army under the command of Gen. Gates met the British at Camden, one hundred and twenty miles north-west of Charleston, S. C., under Lord Cornwallis; at which meeting the *laurels of Saratoga* were transformed for the American commander, to *drooping willows*. Gates, with his militia, retreated before the successful British troops, while the brave Gen. De Kalb, second in command, with a body of Continental troops who shared his spirit, withstood the repeated assaults of the whole British army until he fell covered with wounds and glory. Congress *resolved* at the time to erect a monument to the memory of this noble German at Annapolis, which has not yet been done.

In September, an attempt was made by Gen. Benedict Arnold to surrender the fortress of West Point by *treachery*, to Sir Henry Clinton, which transaction with its interesting details, will be found in another part of this work, under a sketch of the life of David Williams, one of the captors of Maj. Andre.



## CHAPTER XV.

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The events of 1781, opened with an unpleasant occurrence. The sufferings of the soldiers had been very severe, added to which some had been detained in service beyond the term of their enlistment, while all were in arrears of pay for their services. In the evening of the first day of Jannary, the troops of the Pennsylvania line stationed at Morristown, New Jersey, numbering 1300, paraded under arms—determined to march to Philadelphia and demand from Congress immediate redress. Their officers endeavored by persuasion to lull their murmurs and disperse them to their quarters, but to no purpose—although one was killed and several wounded. Gen. Wayne, in front of these men, cocked his pistols to compel obedience to his commands, but in an instant an hundred guns were leveled at his breast. “We love and respect you,” said the malcontents, “but fire and you are a dead man.” Declaring their intention of not going over to the enemy, they elected temporary officers—and marched off in a body for Princeton. Several agents sent by Sir Henry Clinton to win them to the British interest, were handed over by the revolters to the Americans, who executed them as *spies*. Committees from Congress and the Legislature of Pennsylvania, met them at Princeton, paid part of their arrears in *specie*, and they returned to their duty. This mutiny was followed by one of less consequence in the troops of New Jersey, which was quelled and the ringleaders instantly executed.

Early in the year 1781, a block-house was erected on Mr. Houck’s land in Kneiskern’s dorf, near the present residence of George Taylor, and picketed in. A similar one was constructed

about the same time in Hartman's dorf. A block-house, similar to the one called *Fort-Plain*, was erected that spring near the dwelling of Jacob Shafer in Cobelskill, about half a mile east of Cobelskill village. This block-house was erected by Capt. Duboise of Catskill, and was called Fort Duboise. It was surrounded by a deep moat, which was partially filled with water from a brook running near. About half an acre of ground, on which stood the dwelling of Shafer, was embraced in the inclosure, which was also surrounded by pickets. The gate or principal entrance was on the eastern side. This fort, with a small garrison, was for some time under the command of Capt. Duboise.

Early in the spring of this year, several minor transactions of interest occurred in the Saratoga settlements. In the present town of Clifton-Park resided one Fillmore, a lieutenant of militia, who possessed a fearless spirit. He was engaged, in the proper season, in making maple-sugar, and usually boiled all night, returning home in the morning to be relieved by a daughter, until he had foddered his cattle and taken breakfast. On going to the woods she was instructed, in case she saw any suspicious looking persons, to give no signs of fear, but communicate the discovery to her father as soon after as prudence allowed. One very foggy morning, when Miss Fillmore was in attendance at the sugar-bush, an individual passed it, without seeing her, going in the direction of a retired dwelling occupied by a widow lady. As soon as the strange figure was out of sight, she ran home to apprise her father of the discovery. She described the man to be *a suspicious looking person, having a gun and a hairy pack.*

Lieut. Fillmore, rightly suspecting the visitant to be the notorious Jo. Bettys, got two of his neighbors, named Perkins and Corey, to accompany him, and all well armed proceeded unobserved to the widow's house, one of the three going upon the back side of it, to prevent his egress. The other two burst open the door, and disclosed the object of search at the breakfast table. He had imprudently seated himself with his back toward the door, and his rifle lying across the table. The instant an entrance was forced, the lieutenant seized the villain by the collar and drew him

from the table, as he was reaching for his trusty piece. He was soon overpowered by the three militiamen, and tightly bound. Before he started for Albany, he desired to smoke, and was partially loosened to afford him an opportunity. He went to the fire-place to light his pipe, and was noticed to cast something in the fire. One of his captors snatched it from the live embers, and found it to be a silver bullet which screwed together; inside of which was a message to Sir Henry Clinton from an officer in Canada, written in figures. On the testimony contained within the bullet, Bettys was convicted and hung at Albany as a *spy*. Considering his desperate character, the enterprise of Lieut Fillmore and his companions in arresting him, was one of the most daring performed in the whole war.

When the arrest of Bettys became known in the Ballston settlement, Maj. Mitchell enjoined secrecy of the affair, rightly conjecturing that he had not traversed the northern forests of New-York, alone. A Mrs. Camp or Van Camp, a widow living in the neighborhood, had a son in the British service, who it was thought, might possibly have accompanied Bettys. The arrest of the latter having been kept close during the day; Kenathy Gordon, a sergeant, was entrusted by Maj. Mitchell with the search to be made the same night. Attended by John Sweatman and several other fearless neighbors, properly armed, young Gordon gained access to the house of Mrs. Camp after bed-time, and enquired for her son. She declared her ignorance of his whereabouts, pretended to be highly incensed at having armed men enter her dwelling and disturb the family at midnight, and still more *on being suspected of harboring an enemy*.

This woman talked very patriotic, but the warmth she manifested satisfied the sergeant, who was a resolute fellow, that her son was in the house; and he went to the fire-place, seized a blazing brand and started up stairs. Young Camp and Jonathan Miller had accompanied Bettys to the neighborhood, and were then in an upper room. Hearing the noise below, they sprang out of bed, seized their guns and leveled them. At the click of their locks, Gordon jumped down stairs, and *swore if they did not*

*descend and surrender themselves prisoners in less than five minutes, he would smoke them out.* Believing he would execute his threat and burn the house, they concealed some money under a rafter, and then came down and submitted to Gordon's authority, who conducted them to the dwelling of Maj. Mitchell, where they were secured until morning. The prisoners had not the least suspicion that Bettys had been arrested, until after they were. On his way to the major's dwelling, Miller was heard to say *he would rather he shot than to enter it.* Obadiah Miller, a brother living in the vicinity, was sent for in the morning, and unexpectedly ushered into the presence of his tory kinsman, whose visit to the neighborhood was unknown to him. His surprise was evidently irksome, and he trembled like a leaf. It leaked out in the sequel, that the two Millers were together in the woods when the attempt was made the fall before to capture the major, which he possibly suspected. The two prisoners were taken to Albany, from whence they were liberated or effected an escape.—*Charles Mitchell.*

In the spring of 1781, Col. Livingston, with his regiment of New York troops, marched up the Mohawk valley to Fort Plain. On arriving at the house of George Adam Dockstader, situated four miles west of the present village of Fonda, the regiment halted. This was the only house except the parsonage, left standing in the valley the year before, from Tribe's Hill to the Nose, a distance of nine or ten miles. An upper room of Dockstader's house was found to be locked, and Maj. Davis,\* a spirited officer of the regiment, demanded the key: but the magic iron of ingenious in-

\*Maj. Davis was a native of East Hampton, L. I. He became a prisoner to the enemy in the latter part of the war, was confined in one of the *charnel houses* in New York, and there died, as was believed, by having poison administered to him in chocolate. An American captain, who was a fellow-prisoner, tasted the beverage, but suspecting its ingredients, would not drink it, and advised Maj. D. not to—but the latter had already swallowed a portion of it. He was immediately taken ill, and died soon after. Several other prisoners died at the same time, from the same cause. Such was the fate of many—yes, very many, brave American officers and soldiers. They were either poisoned outright, or subjected to such privations for the want of wholesome food, clothing, medical attendance, fuel, and ventilated rooms, as hurried them off by hundreds to eternity.—*Williamson.*



vention had disappeared, and could not possibly be found. "*Well, then,*" said the intrepid major, "*bring me an axe ; I can open it.*" Rather than have the door mutilated, the family produced the key, when lo ! the room was found to be literally filled *with hams and other smoked meat*. The major concluded, and no doubt correctly, that from the different colors the meat presented, it had been smoked in many places ; and that most of it must have been gathered by Indians and Tories, and there deposited to be used as occasion might require. He therefore thought it advisable to victual his own men from it, and leaving a year's supply for the family, the rest was "*pressed into the service,*" to the gratification of the troops.—*James Williamson, a soldier present.*

On the 2d day of March of this year, James Williamson, a sergeant, was sent, (as he informed the writer) with Corporal Samuel Betts and half a dozen soldiers, from Fort Schuyler to guard about the same number of wood-choppers, and attend to measuring a quantity of wood already chopped, distant about half a mile from that post. While thus engaged, Brant came suddenly upon the Americans, with a large body of Indians and Tories, and discharging a volley of balls to intimidate them, rushed up and captured the whole party, except Williamson, who fled, amidst a shower of bullets, in safety to the fort. Only two of the Americans were wounded, William Moffatt and Timothy Reynolds—the former with a broken thigh, and the latter a bullet-hole in his cheek, the ball having entered at the mouth. Moffatt fired on the Indians, on which account he was tomahawked, scalped, stripped of his clothing, and left for dead. The enemy immediately set forward, and forded the Mohawk some distance below.

On the arrival of Williamson at the fort, an alarm gun was fired, by which the captives knew their sergeant had escaped. A strong force immediately turned out, and were piloted by him in pursuit of the foe. At the place where the Americans had been surprised, Moffatt was found alive, but died soon after. On reaching the path near the river, which led from Fort Schuyler to Fort Dayton, Brant halted his men, and cut the straps which contained the buckles, from his prisoners' shoes, which he carefully dis-



posed along the path on the crusted snow, that his enemies might know what he had done, giving the captives deer-skin straps with which to tie their shoes. The pursuing party found the buckles, but as it was near night the chase was given over, from fear, probably, of an ambuscade, as the numbers of the presumptuous foe were unknown. Brant first conducted his prisoners to the Oneida castle, some sixteen miles southwest of Utica, and after procuring a supply of corn directed his course to Fort Niagara by the great southwestern route.\* Early in the same spring, two boys, who had gone back of an orchard, only a few hundred yards from Fort Herkimer, to drive home cows, were surprised and captured by seven Indians and two tories, and hurried off to Canada.—*Williamson*.

On the 9th day of July, 1781, a party of the enemy, numbering about five hundred, mostly Indians, under the command of Captain John Dockstader, a tory, who had gone to Canada from the vicinity of the Mohawk, entered a small settlement called Curry Town,† in the present town of Root, three miles southeast from Spraker's Basin. A small block house had been erected near the dwelling of Henry Lewis and picketed in, previous to this invasion, which took place about 10 o'clock, A. M.; and so unexpected was it, that most of the settlers were at their occupations at home when the first alarm was sounded. The Henry Lew-

\*An incident mentioned by *Priest*, in the memoirs of David Ogden, (a captive at the time,) as having taken place before their arrival at Niagara, deserves a notice. Having halted at noon to rest, "Brant took a notion that Corporal Betts should exercise his men and fellow-prisoners, to see, as he said, whether the Yankees could go through the tactics of *Baron Steuben*. The corporal was very loth to do this, through diffidence or a broken spirit, hanging back considerably; but Brant insisted upon it, when Betts drew out his men in due order, fifteen in number, quite a company, dressed them in a straight line, and then went through the manual exercise according to *Steuben*, to the full approbation of Brant. But as they did this, the tories assayed to make sport of them, which Brant forbid with a terrible frown, saying that the Yankees went through with it a d—d sight better than they could, and that he liked to see the thing done well, although it were done by the enemy."

† So called after William Curry, the patentee of the lands in that settlement.

is house is still standing. Jacob Dievendorf, a pioneer settler at that place, was at work in a fallow, with his two sons, Frederick and Jacob, and a negro boy named Jacobus [James] Blood. The last two were captured ; and Frederick, a lad twelve or fourteen years old, in attempting to escape to the fort, was overtaken, tomahawked and scalped. Mrs. Dievendorf, with several female children and five or six slaves, fled from her dwelling and reached the fort in safety. Mrs. D. was a large fleshy woman, and in hastily climbing a fence, on her way to the fort, it fell with her. Peter Bellinger, a brother of Mrs. Dievendorf, who was plowing in the settlement, hearing the alarm, unharnessed a horse, mounted it, and rode toward the Mohawk, pursued by several Indians, who arrived in sight of the river almost as soon as he did ; he, however, escaped. Rudolf Keller and his wife happened to be at the fort when the invaders appeared ; Keller, Henry Lewis, and Conrad Enders being the only men in the fort at the time. Keller's oldest son, discovering the enemy, ran home : and as they lived too far north of the fort to think of gaining it, he hurried the rest of the family into the woods northwest of the house, where they gained a place of temporary safety. As they entered the woods they looked back and saw the Indians at their dwelling. Frederick Lewis and Henry Lewis, Jr., were among the first to gain the fort. The former fired three successive guns to warn the settlers of danger, and several, thus seasonably warned, found a safe retreat in the forest. Jacob Tanner, with his family, were among the last to gain the picketed inclosure. The escape of this family would afford the artist a fair subject for his pencil. As the Indians were approaching his dwelling, he fled from it with a small child in one hand and a gun in the other, followed by his wife, with an infant in her arms, and several children on foot hold of her clothes. The family were pursued toward the fort by the tawny savages, with uplifted tomahawks, thirsting for their blood. Finding he could not cut off their retreat, the Indian in advance drew up his rifle and fired at Tanner. The ball passed just over the head of the child he carried, and entered a picket beside him. Several guns, fired from the fort, caused the enemy to gain a more respectful distance.

The Indians plundered and burnt all the buildings in the settlement, a dozen or more in number, except the house of David Lewis, who resided where Henry Vorhees now does, and a log school-house. Lewis was a tory, and although his house was set on fire, an Indian chief with whom he was acquainted, gave him permission to put it out when they were gone. He did so, and part of the building is still standing. Jacob Moyer and his father, who were cutting timber in the woods not far from Yates's, were found dead and scalped, one at each end of a log. They were killed by the party who pursued Peter Bellinger. The Indians were visible about the settlement until after four o'clock, P. M., when they moved off with their booty. They either killed or drove away most of the cattle and horses in the neighborhood. Several of the latter which were let loose by the Dievendorfs on the approach of the enemy, fled from their pursuit, and leaping a fence the sagacious animals gained a place of safety in the forest.

The lad Frederick Dievendorf, after lying insensible for several hours, recovered and crawled toward the fort. He was seen by his uncle, Mr. Keller, who went out to meet him. As he approached the lad, whose clothes were dyed in his own blood; the latter still bewildered, raised his hands imploringly and besought his uncle not to kill him. Mr. Keller assured him of his intended kindness; took him up in his arms and carried him to the fort. His wounds were properly dressed and he recovered; but was killed several years after by a falling tree. Jacob Dievendorf, senior, fled before the Indians on their approach, and in his flight ran past a prisoner named James Butterfield, at a little distance from whom he threw himself under a fallen tree. His pursuers enquired of Butterfield what direction he had taken. "*That way,*" said the prisoner, pointing in a different direction for the one taken. The party were thus put upon a course which soon carried them past Dievendorf, and left him his own master. Some of the pursuing Indians passed over the log under which the object of search was concealed, and had they looked back, must have discovered him. The captives taken along by the enemy, were Jacob Dievendorf, jun., the negro Jacob, two lads by the

name of Bellinger, and a little girl by the name of Miller, ten or twelve years old.\*

On the morning of the same day on which Curry Town was burnt, Col. Willet dispatched Capt. Gros from Fort Plain, with forty men, with the two-fold object of looking for provisions, and for American foes. As it was known that the settlements of New-Dorlach and New Rhinebeck, were mostly inhabited by tories; thither Capt. Gros directed his steps, in the hope of getting a few beeves for the garrison. Near the former residence of one Baxter, he struck the trail of the enemy; drew up his men beside it, and marched them three times over the ground; when he found that one hundred and twenty men would hardly begin to beat a corresponding track. By this test the number of the enemy was estimated to be, at least five hundred, the number it was afterwards ascertained fully to equal.

Selecting two of his best men to follow the trail, Capt. Gros marched his company to Bowman's creek, to await the report of the scout. The latter proceeded about a mile and came upon the ground where the enemy had encamped the previous night. They approached sufficiently near to observe a large number of packs; and saw a few Indians cooking food—making preparations, as they supposed, for the return of their comrades, who, as it proved, had then gone to destroy Curry Town. They proceeded hastily to the creek and reported to Capt. Gros what they had discovered, who dispatched John Young and one other man on horseback to Fort-Plain, to inform Col. Willet of the espionage, proposing to await his further orders at Bowman's creek.

Willet sent a message to Lieut. Col. Veeder to march as speedily as possible with what troops he could collect at Fort Paris and elsewhere, to the theatre of action. Collecting all the men that could with safety be spared from Fort Rensselaer and Fort-Plain,

\* The preceding facts respecting the invasion of Curry Town were obtained by the writer at repeated interviews with *John, a son of Rudolf Keller, above named; Jacob Dievendorf, the young captive named; and Toby Blood, at that time a young slave in the Dievendorf family.* Butterfield, although a stranger to Dievendorf at the time of saving his life, came to Curry Town after the war, and was hospitably entertained by him.



with the militia he could in the mean time assemble, Col. Willet set out for Bowman's creek. Passing Fort Clyde, a picketed block-house in Frey's Bush, a draft was made upon that for additional troops, and about midnight he united his forces with those of Capt. Gros: the aggregate number of which was 260, many of whom were militia. Willet set out for the camp of the enemy, and arrived in its vicinity about daylight. They were encamped in a cedar swamp on the north side of the Western turnpike, near the centre of the present town of Sharon. A part of this swamp may now be seen N. E. of the public house kept by Jacob Hiller, about two miles east of the Sharon springs. At that period the swamp extended farther eastward, and the encampment was on the highest ground in the swamp, only a few rods distant from the turnpike, as now laid. On the south side of the road a ridge of land may be seen, and still south of that a small valley. By a circuitous route Col. Willet gained this little dale, and there drew up his men with care in a crescent.

Thus prepared to receive the enemy, who were nearly double his own forces, he sent several men over the ridge to show themselves, fire on the foe, flee, and thus elicit pursuit within the American defiles. The decoy succeeded admirably, the whole party snatching up their weapons joined in the pursuit of the fugitives; and Willet's victory must have been most signally complete, had he stationed his men nearer the enemy's camp, as he might have done without observation: but having nearly half a mile to run, the stool-pigeons were so hotly pursued that the lines were broken to rescue them, which prevented the surprise from being entirely successful. So closely were the camp spies pursued, that Frederick Bellinger, one of the number, was overtaken and slain. Willet's men had been previously instructed to take trees or fallen logs and not leave them, and they were in all cases to reserve their fire until they had a fair shot. The battle lasted about two hours, when, to use the words of an American soldier who was in that battle, "*The Indians got tired of them, and made off.*"—*John Adam Strobeck.* He was a private under Capt. Gros, was in the hottest part of the engagement, and was wounded in one hip.



The enemy, in their retreat, were hotly pursued by the Americans, led on by Col. Willet in person, and so completely were they routed, that most of their camp equipage, and plunder obtained the day before, fell into the hands of their victorious pursuers. Willet continued the chase but a short distance, fearing he might in turn fall into a snare, and the tables be turned upon him.—*Strobeck*.

When the enemy returned in the evening to their encampment—distant from Curry Town 12 or 14 miles—they captured a German living near the former place, named Carl Herwagen. Finding it necessary to retreat, the Indians chose to kill their prisoners, lest they should lose the value of their scalps. Herwagen, who had been tied to a tree during the engagement, was loosened by his captor, who told him to run with the retreating Indians, instead of doing which he turned and fled the other way—was shot down, tomahawked and scalped. The prisoners were all scalped except Butterfield and one of the Bellinger boys, who were taken to Canada.—*Jacob Dievendorf,\* Mrs. Tunis Vrooman and Frederick Hiller*. The latter settled in the vicinity of the Indian camp soon after the war.

Col. Willett, had *five* men killed in this battle, two of whom were Bellinger before mentioned, and a soldier named Kittle: and *eight* wounded, *two mortally*; Capt. Robert McKean, a brave and meritorious officer who died the next day at Fort Rensselaer,† and a private who died at Fort Plain. Among the wounded was a son of Capt. McKean, who received a bullet in his mouth. The loss of the enemy was very severe, although never satisfactorily known; it was supposed in killed and mortally wounded, to be about fifty. Capt. Dockstader undertook the principal direction of this body of destructives, as was afterwards ascertained, to show

\* The *Life of Brant* erroneously states that he, (Dievendorf,) was buried by Willet's men. He says he partially buried himself in leaves, to keep off the punkies and musketoes which annoyed him.

† This fort, erected early in 1781, was at Canajoharie, where a stone-house owned by Philip Van Alstine was inclosed. This ancient dwelling, now owned by John H. Moyer, is still standing. It was for a time the headquarters of Col. Willet.

himself worthy of a major's commission. He is said to have had one other engagement, and returned to Canada with his forces greatly reduced, glad to retain a captain's commission.—*Strobeck*.

Two of the enemy carried a wounded comrade from the battle field, on a blanket between two poles, all the way to the Genesee valley, where he died. Col. Willett returned to Fort Plain without burying any of the dead. After the battle was over and the conquerors had left the field, Col. Veeder,\* arrived there with one hundred men from the north side of the river, mostly from Stone Arabia. He buried the Americans killed in battle, and fortunately found and buried those murdered near the camp. Young Dievendorf, who had been scalped, was discovered alive rustling among the leaves, and his bloody face was mistaken for that of an Indian by one of Veeder's men who leveled a gun to fire upon him; but a fellow soldier seasonably knocked up the weapon. Miss Miller, also scalped, was found alive, and was with the lad Dievendorf taken along to Fort Plain. The little girl was very weak when found, and on drinking a draught of cold water she instantly expired before reaching that fort. Jacob Dievendorf and his brother Frederick, under the care of Doctor Faught, a German physician of Stone Arabia, recovered from their wounds.—*Strobeck, Dievendorf and Hiller*.

Jacob Dievendorf's head was *five years* in healing. He still lives in Curry Town; is one of the wealthiest farmers in Montgomery county; and is in truth a *living monument* of that unholy policy which armed the savage, taught from his infancy to practise cruelty on an enemy instead of mercy, with a tomahawk and scalping knife, to slay the helpless women and unoffending offspring of the rebel sons of Briton, who dared demand as their right, *the privileges of British subjects*.

Most of the cattle driven away from Curry Town, being abandoned in the retreat of the enemy, found their way back alone to their former pastures: one of twelve horses taken by the enemy was recovered near the Indian camp, and three more broke loose from their new masters and returned to the settlement.—*John Keller*.

\* Col. Veeder resided in the Mohawk valley, two miles west of the village of Fonda, on the farm now owned by Lynds Jones.

On the morning of the same day on which Col. Willet engaged the enemy, the Rev. P. N. Sommer, the Lutheran minister of Schoharie, then blind, was to have preached in New Rhinebeck, in which settlement he had several sons with whom he dwelt. His hearers, some from a distance of five or six miles, were assembling at the barn of Conrad Brown, and he had taken his text, as a messenger, named Utman, arrived and reported that he had heard several hundred guns fired in rapid succession a few miles distant. The minister, it is said, turned deadly pale on hearing the report, and the meeting was instantly broken up. Philip Hoffman, the old gentleman living near the France family, who had escaped from the tomahawk of Crysler and his mercenaries the preceding fall, hastened home from the meeting to secrete his wife once more; and just as he arrived at his house some half a dozen Indians came up and killed and scalped them both. No other injury was done in the settlement at that time.\*

The Indians, in their retreat from Sharon, crossed the west creek in New Dorlach, near the former residence of Col. Rice, on their way to the Susquehanna.—*Brown.*

*John D. Hiller*, who now owns the ground on which the Sharon battle was fought, found several relics of that contest after the land was cleared up; one of which, the barrel of a fowling gun, of London manufacture, is still in his possession. Many human bones which were bleaching on the land below, were collected and buried.

I conjecture that some small parties of the Indians who accompanied Capt. Dockstader, lingered about the Susquehanna and returned to the frontier settlements. In the latter part of July, a party of the enemy, consisting of Capt. David, a Mohawk sachem, Seth's Joseph, a Schoharie Indian, and brother of Henry, and *seven* others—one of whom was suspected by the prisoners to have been a painted tory—surprised William Bouck (a relative

\* *Henry France, Marcus Brown, and the record of the Lutheran Church, which records the murder of Hoffman and wife, and Herwagen, as having transpired on the 10th day of July, the date given by several living witnesses. Col. Stone erroneously dates the occurrence on the 1st of July.*

of his namesake previously captured,) and his son Lawrence, (then 18 years old,) Frederick Mattice and his son Frederick, (a lad 10 years old,) and two little girls: one a sister of young Mattice, and the other a cousin. The captives when surprised, were engaged in harvesting wheat in the afternoon, near a large oak tree, which is still standing on the lands of John Henry, in Middleburgh. Two other lads, George, a son of Frederick, and Nicholas, a son of Wm. Mattice, who were in the field when the enemy appeared, escaped by flight.\*

The party moved directly up the Schoharie valley, and after proceeding several miles, the two girls were liberated and returned home. They encamped the first night twelve or fifteen miles distant from the wheat-field. When the journey commenced, the Indians had but little to eat: near the Gen. Patchin place, they shot a hedgehog, which, when they encamped at night, after burning off the quills instead of skinning, they roasted for their supper. Tomahawks were used instead of carving knives to distribute it, but the prisoners declined eating.

At night, the captives were stripped of part of their clothing and tightly bound. In the evening a thunder shower came up, and all the party took shelter under a large tree. As they laid down to rest, Lawrence Bouck was so closely pinioned, he told Capt. David he could not sleep, and the rope was loosened. He then laid down between two Indians, while a third one located himself so as to substitute his body for a pillow. While the Indians were eating supper, Lawrence, having an opportunity, told the elder Mattice, who was his uncle, that he intended to make his escape that night. Some time in the night, he worked himself out from under the precious head he pillowed, and sat up. Perceiving the party all asleep, he succeeded in loosening the cord which bound his arms. A band, such as the Indians generally used to carry burdens over their shoulders, adorned his neck; which, in his first efforts to loosen, he shirred in a noose tightly

\* The particulars relating to the captivity of these persons, were derived at personal interviews, from *Lawrence Bouck* and the younger *Mattice*: two of the captives.



around his throat ; but this also he removed ; then at a single bound, without touching his hands, he sprang upon his feet : a feat which he declared himself unable ever afterwards to perform. Casting his eye over the group indistinctly visible upon the ground around him, he saw no movement ; and taking French leave of his drowsy companions, he directed his steps towards the Upper Schoharie fort, only a mile or two from which he had been captured. Bouck afterwards learned from his father, that his running awoke the Indians, several of whom pursued him one hundred yards or more ; but it being too dark to discover the course he had taken, they returned. The two Mattices were led out in the morning and tied to a tree *to be killed*, the Indians suspecting them of having loosened the cords which bound their fellow prisoner. Mr. Bouck told them that his son would not have made his escape, had he not feared they would bind him so tight as to cause his death. He was treated with far less severity on the way to Canada, than was either Mattice or his son.

Lawrence Bouck arrived near the Patchin place, on his return, just at daylight, where he saw numerous tracks, and was at first seriously alarmed, as the captors had asserted, the day previous, that a large body of Indians were to attack the Schoharie settlements that day ; but on examining the tracks, his fears were dispelled, by observing that the feet which made them had not been mocasoned, as those of Indians would have been.

When it was known at the forts that the Boucks and Mattices were taken prisoners, Col. Vrooman dispatched Capt. Gray, with a small company of troops, in pursuit. He followed until evening, and not overtaking the enemy, returned to Schoharie. Had he prosecuted the pursuit next day, it was believed he would have come up with them. It was the tracks of these soldiers that Lawrence Bouck discovered while returning.—*George Richtmyer.*

The captives were twenty days journeying to Niagara, and several times were greatly straightened for food. Once on the way, probably on the Susquehanna, they lived a day or two on green apples ; and for *four days they had nothing to eat*. At Oquago they fortunately found a colt which had been lost by Capt. Dock-



stader's party. This was killed, divided and feasted upon. Part of the animal was dried by the fire and taken along. One wild duck was also shot on the way. They went down the Susquehanna river to Chenango Point, (now Binghamton)—on foot, however—and from thence to the Genesee valley, where the prisoners were compelled to run the gantlet. Young Mattice had been previously divested of all his clothing, except his shirt, which rendered him peculiarly vulnerable to the gads and corn-stalks used by the young Indians. In the Genesee valley they obtained green corn and pumpkins. On arriving at the Tonawanda creek, the *punkies* tormented young Mattice nights, and he adopted the expedient of the lad Dievendorf—that of burying his person in the forest leaves—to keep them off. They all laid down to rest nights, *like so many dogs in a kennel*.

On arriving at Niagara the prisoners were confined in the guard house. They were soon after separated, Bouck being taken first to Montreal and then to Quebec—from whence, being exchanged for an American prisoner, he was removed to Halifax, and soon after sailed for Boston. From the latter place he traveled to Schoharie, where he arrived between Christmas and New Year's day, the year succeeding his capture.\* The Mattices did not return home until after the conclusion of peace. A tory brother of the elder Mattice, who had left Schoharie in 1777, then residing in Canada, on learning that Frederick was a prisoner, tried to persuade an Indian to kill him. Such was the fraternal affection too often manifested in the Revolution by those who espoused the royal cause. Mr. Mattice was retained by an Indian, five weeks, to construct a log house. During this time, the latter, on one occa-

\* Peter Zimmer, of Schoharie, taken the July following Bouck's capture, and Adam Garlock of Sharon, fellow prisoners, accompanied him home from Boston. On their way they had to beg provisions, and the cupboards of the patriotic Yankees were willingly opened to them. Garlock evinced some delicacy lest they might tax too heavily the hospitality of strangers, and when the inquiry *whether they would not have more bread*, was made, he replied no, they had a great plenty. His ready answers cost his companions several stinted meals, until they threatened to flog him if he again prevented their satisfying their hunger. They afterwards fared better, and reached home in safety.

sion, returned from Niagara drunk, and got his prisoner up in the night to murder him. He struck a blow at his head with some missile, which the latter parried, and the Indian's squaw caught hold of her liege lord and held him, sending Mattice out of the hut, where he remained until the *demonizing* effect of the alcohol passed from the warrior's brain.

On the ratification of peace in the summer of 1783, the British and American prisoners were all liberated, at which time the Mattices were put on board of a sloop, with about six hundred others, and taken to Bucks Island, near the outlet of Lake Ontario, from whence they were sent to Montreal in bateaus. After a delay of two weeks, the Mattices, with a great number of other prisoners, proceeded by water up the river Sorel, and landed at Plattsburg, on Lake Champlain, and were set *free* about the 16th day of December. The snow was then some six inches deep, through which they had to foot it home. The prisoners were tolerably well protected against the weather by old clothes given them at different places. Three brothers, named Van Alstyne, who had been captured in the Mohawk valley, returned home with the Schoharie prisoners.

On Sunday preceding August 14th of this year, about four hundred Indians and tories, under Capt. Caldwell, made their appearance in Ulster county, but were so warmly received by the citizens and militia in several skirmishes, that they retreated with much more loss than gain. At this time, Gov. Clinton, fearing the next point of attack from the enemy would be Schoharie, wrote to Gen. Gansevoort, the commanding officer at Albany, to send a detachment of troops there to protect those settlements. About the same time, Col. Vrooman, of Schoharie, who had heard of the enemy's proximity, wrote Gen. Gansevoort for assistance. Troops were accordingly dispatched, under Colonels Van Rensselaer and Wemple, to Schoharie, where they were joined by a party of Oneidas from Schenectada.\*—*Letters of Gov. Clinton to Gen. Gansevoort, and note to the same in Stone's Life of Brant.*

\*The aid thus seasonably sent to Schoharie was fortunately not called into requisition. I conclude that the forces under Capt. Caldwell consisted prin-

At the Keyes' place in Sharon,\* dwelt in the Revolution, a Hanoverian named Christian Myndert, whose family was the only one in that part of Sharon. Having been alarmed several times in the summer, he removed towards fall, in 1781, to Fort Duboise; leaving, at the time of his departure, several hogs running in a field, and a quantity of peas growing on the ground. In the latter part of October, Myndert, accompanied by Lieut. Jacob Borst, of Cobelskill, sergeant Wm. Kneiskern, and Jacob Kerker, proceeded to the dwelling of the former, in Myndert's valley, to secure his peas, shut up his hogs, and take care of some other property. John Crounse now lives on the Myndert farm. The day was cold and stormy, rain and snow alternately falling. The party were endeavoring to secure the hogs, when six Indians commanded by Walradt, a tory from the Mohawk valley, who had been watching their motions for some time, secreted themselves in Myndert's barn near his dwelling.

After Lieut. Borst and his companions had been thus engaged, they repaired to the house, wet and cold, to warm themselves. On entering it, they set their guns in one corner of a room and gathered round the fire place, where was igniting a quantity of dry wood. At this time the enemy entered the dwelling, and so suddenly, that not one of the party could seize a gun in time to fire. Borst snatched up his, however, but in attempting to turn around to discharge it, he was prevented by an Indian who had anticipated his movement. Kneiskern seized a chair to strike one of the invaders, but the latter grappled it in the same instant. Seeing the foes nearly double their own number, with arms in their hands, the Americans surrendered themselves prisoners

cipally of the same destructives led by Capt. Dockstader to Curry Town four weeks before; that the latter officer, meeting a body of the enemy on their way to the frontier settlements of New York, with most of his men, joined Caldwell in the enterprise. If so, this will account for the information of Mr. Strobeck, that Dockstader was again engaged with, and defeated by the Americans, after Willet's battle in Sharon, with very serious loss, before his return to Canada.

\* The tavern stand of Zachariah Keyes, an inn-keeper, known to every one who traveled the western turnpike twenty-five years ago. Several pleasing anecdotes of him are omitted for the want of room.

without further resistance. The latter were then bound, Borst and Kneiskern very tightly, some little plunder made, and all set forward on their journey to Canada. They proceeded to New Dorlach, but a few miles distant, on their way toward the Susquehanna, and encamped for the night. Borst and Kneiskern, thinking their foes all asleep, were planning their destruction and their own escape, when an Indian who had been watching their intimacy, approached and asked them what they were talking about; and whether they did not contemplate killing their captors. They replied that they were complaining of the cords being so tight they could not sleep. The Indians did not allow them an unguarded moment, and they found it impossible to escape.

It began to snow soon after they left Myndert's place, and the captives suffered very much on their journey from the severity of the weather, the want of proper food, and the cruelty of their masters. As they approached Indian settlements, they were compelled to run the gantlet, by which severe corporal chastisement was inflicted on all, but the most severely on Borst, who fell into a decline soon after reaching Niagara, owing to his cruel treatment on the journey, and death soon after ended his miseries. Thus ignobly fell one of the most daring spirits Schoharie produced during the war. Kerker, who was confined with Borst, was a good nurse, and took care of the latter while lingering with consumption. Kneiskern, who was imprisoned on an island in the St. Lawrence, succeeded one night, in company with several other prisoners, in making his escape. They dug out beneath the pickets which inclosed the fort where they were confined, made a raft on which they floated down the river; and one of the party, from fear the raft might not be sufficient to carry them in safety, swam eight or nine miles with but little support, his clothes being upon it, to where they effected a landing on the American shore. After suffering incredible hardships in the forest, living on birch bark, roots, &c., they arrived in safety among friends, where their wants were supplied, and they reached their homes.—*Henry France, and John M. Brown.*



Some time in the summer of 1781, Solomon Woodworth, who so gallantly defended the Sacondaga block-house, single-handed, in the spring of 1780, having been appointed to the command of a company of rangers, was stationed at Fort Herkimer. Accompanied by his lieutenant, Wilson, forty-three soldiers, and five friendly Indians, he left that fort on a pleasant summer's morning, and crossing the Mohawk, passed up the West Canada creek, on a secret expedition. His movements, however, had been carefully noted by his foes, who were hovering about the settlement in great numbers, thirsting for his blood. Capt. Woodworth's command made a fine appearance on leaving the fort, and were in unusually good spirits. They had proceeded but a few miles up the stream when they found themselves instantly surrounded by a large body of the enemy, with whom they contended bravely for a time, but were overpowered by numbers, and their leader and many of his men killed. Of the whole fifty, who set out in the morning full of life and hope, only fifteen whites and two Indians again reached the fort, having cut their way through the thick ranks of the foe-man. A party sent to bury the dead, found their bodies greatly mutilated and disfigured, done by the Indians to revenge the death of the five slain by Woodworth and party as before shown.

The same season a man named Weaver went to catch a horse in the vicinity of Fort Dayton, and was shot down and scalped. He was left for dead, but revived and lived three days. Captain Small and a soldier who went from the same fort that fall to an orchard to bury apples, were surprised by a party of Indians and both killed. Two men were shot at Fort Herkimer the same year for desertion. They were tried at a fort below, and sent there to be executed. As they sat upon their coffins, a sergeant and six privates fired at one, and a corporal and six privates at the other; after which two soldiers advanced and discharged their pieces with the muzzles near, into the heads of the unfortunate men, blowing out their brains.—*Sylvanus Wilcox, a soldier at Fort Dayton in 1781, and general of militia after the war.*



## CHAPTER XVI.

On the afternoon of October 24th, 1781, a body of the enemy, consisting of nearly seven hundred British and royalist troops and Indians, under Maj. Ross, who was accompanied in the expedition by Maj. Walter Butler, of Cherry Valley memory, entered the Mohawk river settlements, making their first appearance in Curry Town. Passing through that ill-starred place, which had been pretty effectually destroyed the preceding July, they avoided the little fort and did not fire the buildings then standing, from fear of frustrating part of their enterprise. Proceeding from thence to the Mohawk valley, they met and captured Jacob Tanner, Rudolf Keller, and his wife, Frederick Utman, Michael Stowits, and Jacob Myers, citizens of Curry Town, as they were returning from the funeral of a Mrs. Putman, who had been buried that afternoon near Lasher's canal tavern. Mrs. Keller was left near Yates's, by the interposition of a nephew who was among the tories, and the party afterwards avoided capturing females. Mr. Myers, who was far advanced in years, being unable to endure the fatigues of so long and rapid a march, was killed and scalped on the way to Canada, and his body there left a prey for wild beasts.—*John Keller.*

Maj. Ross proceeded down the Mohawk, taking the new road but recently laid over Stone Ridge, in Root. On the Ridge they captured John Wood, the son of a widow, at whose house they arrived near twilight. Joseph Printup,\* a lieutenant of militia, was

\* William Printup, an Englishman, father of the one named in the context, who was among the early settlers of the Mohawk valley, was a blacksmith, and resided near the lower Mohawk castle. While there, he was employed by the British government to repair guns, make axes, hatchets, hoes, &c., for the natives. One day when Printup was at work in his shop, an Indian, who

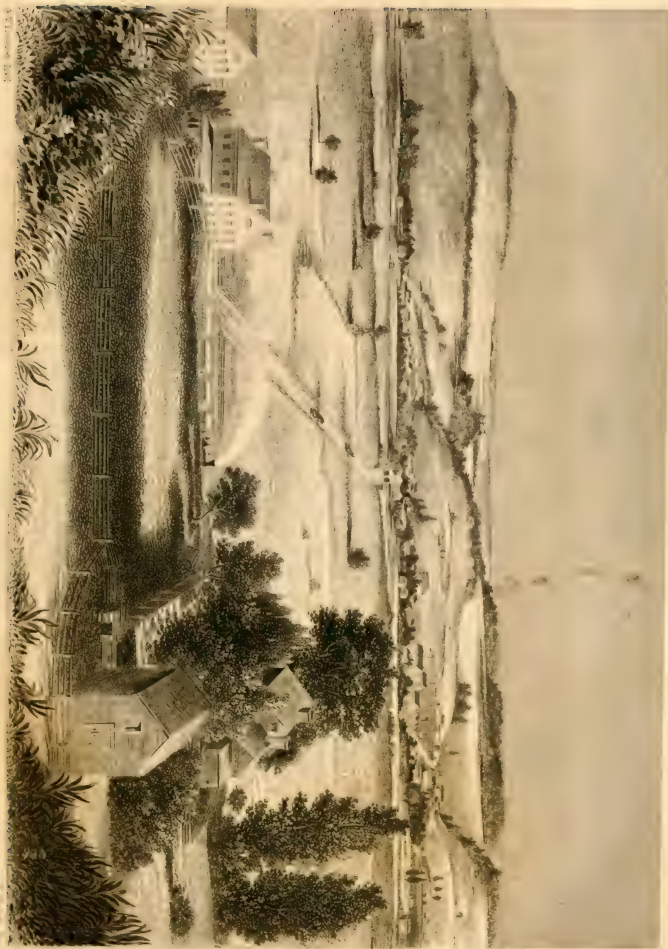
living at that time near the residence of his son, the late William I. Printup. He was at home as Ross approached, and Jacob Frank, a brother-in-law, John Loucks and John Van Alstyne, neighbors, were also at his house. Printup had just been cleaning his gun, and as he loaded it and returned the ram-rod, he remarked, "*Now I am ready for the Indians!*" He had scarcely uttered the words, when an advance party of them, just at dusk, was seen approaching the door. Frank and Loucks sprang out of the house and fled up the hill south; the former was shot down, however, and scalped, but the latter unscathed, effected his escape. As the Indians approached his door, Printup fired at them, when they rushed into the house, and one of them, placing the muzzle of his gun near Printup's breast, drew the trigger,—at which instant the latter struck the weapon down, and its bullet passed through the fleshy part of the thigh. A tory acquaintance, who was with the enemy, then interfered to save Printup's life, and he was taken prisoner, soon after which the enemy resumed their march down the river. A little distance east of Printup's, a halt was made at a large rock beside the road to kill him; but the tory again interposed, and declared he should not be killed while he could keep up with his captors. Van Alstyne lent his services to aid his wounded companion, who leaned upon his shoulder, and was thus enabled to continue the journey.—*John, a son of Joseph Printup.*

had taken umbrage at him from some cause, entered the shop and bade him *kneel down and pray*. "*Pray!*" said Printup, "*for what?*" "*Because I am going to kill you,*" was the reply. "*To kill me? I'll beat your head in with my hammer,*" he retorted, raising the instrument he held in his hand, and giving evidence of suiting the action to the word, as he turned upon his red foe. The latter, armed only with a knife, was taken all aback, and seeing the determined look of his antagonist, fled from his shop, hotly pursued by Vulcan in his leather apron, with uplifted hammer. The chase was continued for some distance, in the presence of many Mohawks, who were not a little amused; and who added several loud whoops, crying out, "*Kill um Print! Cha-aw-go-cheth-c-taw-go!*" terrifying the poor fellow so that he buried himself in the recesses of the forest, and never again disturbed the labors of the King's blacksmith. The Indian word *Cha-aw-go-cheth-c-taw-go*, signifying *Pursue and kill him if you can*, was the name by which Printup was ever after called by the natives.—*J. L. Groat.*

Jacob, a brother of John Van Alstyne named above, resided on the Stone Ridge at this time. He had been to attend a religious meeting near the present village of Fultonville, and was returning home on horseback, when he unexpectedly fell in with the enemy. A large Indian seized the bridle, several of his fellows drew Van Alstyne from the horse a prisoner, and the former mounted. The Indian was hardly upon his back, when the horse, not fancying his new rider, reared, floundered and soon left him upon the ground with a broken shoulder. The sagacious animal then set off at full speed, and the enemy opening to the right and left, gave him a free passage; and not caring to fire on him, he escaped from them and returned home, greatly alarming Van Alstyne's family as may be supposed. The prisoner was divested of part of his clothing and the march resumed.—*Cornelius G. Van Alstyne.*

Charles Van Epps, who resided where the dwelling of Evert Yates now stands in Fultonville, escaped with his family as the enemy approached. Evert Van Epps, a nephew of the former, started in the evening, which was very dark, to go to his uncle's, (distant from his own dwelling scarcely one quarter of a mile,) to enquire after the news. Possibly he had heard the firing at Printup's two miles above, and suspected all was not right. He had not proceeded half way to his uncle's residence, when, as he had crossed a small bridge and was opening a swing gate near the end of it into the road, in the present garden of John Mead, he heard the click made by cocking several guns, and a voice sternly demand "*Who's there?*" The first thought of Van Epps, who could distinguish no visible object, was, to turn and flee; but supposing some of the enemy might be in his rear, or that he would instantly be fired at if he attempted to run, he remained at the gate and was soon surrounded by a hostile party, who were on their way to his house. On securing this prisoner, the enemy again moved forward.—*John E., son of Evert Van Epps.*

Opposite is a very accurate view of Fultonville, as seen in the summer from an eminence in Fonda, on the opposite, or north side of the Mohawk. In giving place to this plate, it may be necessary to assign some reason for its insertion. The village has but few historic associations, and is but the fourth of importance







in Montgomery county; Amsterdam, Fort Plain and Canajoharie each having a population more than twice as large. The engraving is inserted in compliance with the wishes, and at the expense of its enterprising citizens; from whom the author has received, as his list of subscribers can show, flattering encouragement to publish. Fultonville, named at a meeting of the citizens soon after it began its existence, in honor of Robert Fulton, has sprung up on the Erie canal since its completion, and contains an hundred dwellings, with a population of six hundred inhabitants. A good part of the village is now built on ground called in the Revolution, "Van Epps's Swamp." The small dwelling seen in the extreme left of the picture, was erected just after the war of the Revolution closed, by John Starin. This house stands near the bank of the river, and was for a long time known as a public house. Indeed, before the Mohawk turnpike was constructed, a line of stages was established on the north side of the river, and at this inn the passengers from Albany usually dined. About the year 1795, this house was the western termination of the mail-route in the Mohawk valley, which route was afterwards extended to Herkimer, and still later to Utica. When the mail-route ended at the house in question, to which it was borne once a week, Myndert Starin, a son of the inn keeper, as often carried it to Johnstown, four miles north, then its place of destination, either on foot or on horseback. In the river, nearly opposite this dwelling, may be seen the rock which originated a name for the ancient village of "*Caughnawaga*," on the north side, which, as already stated, literally signifies, "*Stone in the water*." A few rods from the site of the dwelling near the bank of the river, seen in the right hand of the picture, (more ancient site of the Charles Van Epps dwelling,) stood a small block-house, erected near the close of the Revolution.

But to return to the war path. Seasonable alarm was communicated by John C.,\* a son of Charles Van Epps, who chanced fortunately to be on horseback, to the river settlers below, who made their escape. On arriving at a brook in a small ravine, near the present site of John Van C. Alstyne's store, at Auriesville, John Van Alstyne said to his fellow prisoner, Printup, "Were it not for you, I would now make my escape." His wounded friend replied—"Never mind me: if you can escape, do so, and leave me to my fate." They were walking between two Indians, when Van Alstyne sprang out, dashed up the ravine with the fleetness of an Indian, and escaped: the enemy did not care about firing on

\* He was a justice of the peace after the war. While crossing the river on the ice, some years ago, he broke through and was drowned.

him from motives of policy. Again the Indian who had captured Printup was about to sink a tomahawk into his head, but was prevented by the tory who had before interdicted such an occurrence. From Auriesville, the enemy proceeded to Fort Hunter, forded the Schoharie near its mouth and prosecuted their enterprise as far as Yankee Hill, in the present town of Florida. From thence, becoming fearful of pursuit, the main body forded the Mohawk and directed their course to Johnstown. Small parties of the Indians, however, carried their designs still further; but Capt. Wm. Snook, who had been notified of their approach, sent Conrad Stein, an officer under him, to warn the settlers of danger, and they generally effected their escape, with a portion of their property. A short time before the Revolution, Matthias Wart and Marcus Hand, Germans, settled in the interior of this town. The invaders burnt the dwellings of Wart, Henry Rury, Captain Snook, John Stein, Samuel Pettingell, Wm. DeLine, Patrick Connelly, George Young, and several others in the neighborhood. Near the house of Rury, a man named Bowman was captured, and in attempting his escape, soon after, was killed. The female part of Rury's family, consisting of his wife, her sister Harriet Notman, and a little girl named Jane Shelp, were made prisoners by One Armed Peter; who conducted them some distance from the house. Harriet had a child in her arms, and falling down with it, Peter insisted on carrying it, as supposed, to prevent his being shot, should he meet an American marksman. Arriving at a by-place, the party halted, and the Indian asked the young women *if they had any money*. An outside pocket was then worn over the dress, and Harriet, loosening hers, handed it to him. From it he transferred *two doubloons* to his own person, and then returned it. Giving a loud yell, it was responded to by some half a dozen so terrific, as to cause Miss Jane to faint away beside a log. Being joined by several of his comrades, Peter gave the prisoners their liberty, and no further injury or violence was offered them.

The suffering of Printup must have been acute while crossing the Schoharie and Mohawk rivers, the waters of which were then

cold. On arriving at Johnstown, Mrs. Van Sickler, a Scotch woman, and resident of the place, interceded in his behalf, and he was left at her house : from whence he returned home and was cured of his wounds.—*Van Epps, Printup and John Hand.* At Johnstown, Hugh McMonts, a constable, and William Crowley were surprised and killed.—*Mrs. Penelope Forbes.*

What other mischief the invaders occasioned previous to their arrival in Johnstown, I have not learned ; but it is presumed that other prisoners were made, and possibly some other citizens slain. On the following day, Col. Willet having collected what troops could be spared from the garrisons in the Mohawk valley, and militia in the vicinity, marched to attack the enemy, who were overtaken near Johnson Hall, where a severe engagement took place, which lasted for several hours, with alternate success. Capt. Zielie, a brave militia officer, was captured by the enemy during the day, and taken to Canada, receiving while there his full share of suffering. Ross was finally compelled to retreat, which he did with serious loss. He proceeded about four miles and encamped for the night, at which time the prisoner Van Alstyne escaped.\*—*C. G. Van Alstyne.* Retreating westward

\* The following incident attendant on the Johnstown battle, was told the author by *Joseph Wagner*. In the Revolution a hedge-fence ran eastward from Johnson Hall, and the men under Willet were upon one side of it, and those under Ross the other. After a few shots the Americans retreated in confusion, but were rallied, returned to the field; and acting in concert with troops in the enemy's rear, gained a signal victory: When the Americans first retreated, Wagner was the last man to leave the ground. Seeing an officer genteelly clad spring into the fence near, he fired and brought him down. In an instant a hundred guns were leveled at his own person, and he fled in safety amid their discharge. After the battle was over and Willet's men had encamped, Wagner attended by several friends visited the field to learn the fate of the handsome officer he had fired at. He found him on the ground near where he had fallen, and addressed him much as follows:—My dear sir, I am the man who shot you in the afternoon, but I have a fellow feeling for you : permit me and I will take you to our camp, where you shall receive kind treatment and good care. "*I would rather die on this spot,*" was his emphatic reply, "*than leave it with a d—d rebel !*" The young officer, who was very good looking, with long black hair, was left to his fate.

By dawn of day the Americans were put in motion, and Wagner saw no more of the warrior named ; but on the approach of several Oneidas in the

from Johnstown,\* the enemy took the Fish House road.—*Joseph Wagner*. Arriving at the East and West Canada creeks, the enemy forded them four abreast, carrying poles to prevent falling.—*Van Epps*. Near the West Canada creek, a skirmish took place

morning, he observed in the hands of one, *a scalp*, the hair of which resembled that of his.

Capt. Andrew Fink, a native of the Mohawk valley, who possessed a spirit suited for the times, was also in the Johnstown battle. In a correspondence between Andrew Fink, his son, and H. F. Yates, in which a part of the military services of the captain are mentioned, I find the following facts noted. During the action near the Hall, the British took from the Americans a field-piece, which Col. Willet was anxious to recover. He sent Capt. Fink with a party of volunteers to reconnoitre the enemy, and if possible get the lost cannon. Three of the volunteers were Christian and Myndert Fink, brothers of the captain, and George Stansell. While observing the movement of the enemy from the covert of a fallen tree, Stansell was shot down beside his brave leader, with a bullet through his lungs; and was borne from the woods by Hanyost Fink. Strengthening his party of volunteers, Capt. Fink again entered the forest, soon after which he picked up a British knapsack containing a *bottle of French brandy and a cocked hat*. The cannon was soon after re-captured, and it being near night, Willet drew off his men and quartered them in the old Episcopal church in Johnstown; gaining entrance by breaking in a window.

\* Most of the Scotch settlers in and around Johnstown either went to Canada with the Johnsons at the beginning of difficulties, or if they remained, were more the friends of the British than the American government. Duncan McGregor, who resided several miles north of Johnson Hall, was an exception. At the time of Ross' invasion, several Indians and a tory entered this pioneer's house in the evening, who left it as they were approaching, unobserved by them. He gained the rear of his log-dwelling, and through a cranny watched the motions of the party. He was armed with a gun and a sword, and resolved that if any injury or insult was offered his wife, to shoot the offender and flee to the woods. Mrs. McGregor detected a tory as one of the party, by observing his white skin where the paint had worn off. This white Indian enquired of her, "if she could not give them something to eat." She replied that she had some jonny-cake and milk. "That will do," said he, and soon they were eating. As they rose from the table, one of them espied a handsomely painted chest in one corner of the room, and asked what it contained? "It contains books," said she, "and other articles belonging to a relative in Albany." "Ah!" said the speaker, "he belongs to the rebel army I suppose?" She replied that he did; and her countenance indicated no little anxiety as he exclaimed with a menacing gesture, "*be careful you do not deceive us.*" One of the intruders with a tomahawk instantly split the cover, and the books and sundry articles of clothing were thrown upon the floor. The clothing was added to their stock of plunder, and soon after the warriors departed.—*A. J. Comrie*.



between Willet's advance under a sergeant, and a party of the enemy, in which several of the latter were killed.—*John Ostrom.*

After the enemy had passed West Canada creek, Walter Butler lingered behind, unconscious of being within reach of American rifles, and having dismounted, he was in the act of drinking water from a tin cup, as he was discovered by Daniel Olendorf, and Anthony, a Mohawk sachem, both well known in the valley. The two, who were a scout in advance of Willet's army, readily recognized the tory chieftain, and both fired upon him. He fell, and the Indian, casting off his blanket and upon it his rifle, dashed through the stream, tomahawk in hand, to him. He was lying with one elbow upon the ground, the hand supporting his aching head, and as his foe approached, he raised the other hand imploringly and cried—"Spare me—give me quarters!" Remembering the onslaught at Cherry-Valley, and the part the suppliant had there acted amid the unheeded prayers of weeping mothers and orphan children, the Indian replied, "*Me give you Sherry-Falley quarters!*"—burying, with the words, his keen-edged tomahawk in his brain. At the moment he fell, Col. Willet and several of his officers arrived upon the bank of the creek. Informed by Olendorf of Butler's proximity, he instantly forded the stream, attended by Col. Lewis, the Indian chief, on horseback, followed by Col. And. Gray of Stone Arabia, and John Brower of the Mohawk valley, on foot: the two latter walking together to stem the current. They reached the spot just as Anthony raised his knife to perform the last act in the tragedy. Seeing his chief he asked him if he should do it, making a circular motion around the bleeding head. The red colonel asked Willet *if he should be scalped*, who replied, *he belongs to your party, Col. Lewis.* An approving look was sufficient, and the reeking scalp-lock was torn off, in the presence of those witnesses, as the victim lay quivering in death. Such was the fall of Walter Butler.—*Daniel and Peter Olendorf, sons of Daniel Olendorf named in the context; and John I. Brower, son of John Brower above named.*

Which of the American scout shot Butler is uncertain, but Olendorf stated to his friends that he aimed at the cup, which, as the



sun shone upon it, afforded him a good mark; and as Butler was wounded in the head, it is highly probable the ball of Olendorf's rifle brought him down. The Indian having stripped his victim, re-crossed the creek to his companion, and hastily putting on the regimentals began to strut about and assume the airs of a British officer. "*I be Brish ofser!*" said he to Olendorf. "*You are a fool!*" replied the latter. "*Me fool?*" responded the Indian with warmth—" *Me fool? No, me Brish ofser!*" and again the bushes had to bow their submission to his assumed character. Said Olendorf again, "You are a fool! and if any of our men should see you at your back, they would mistake you for the villain who once wore those clothes and instantly shoot you down." This was a view of the case which the Indian had not taken, but the words were hardly uttered by his comrade ere he doffed them and resumed his blanket.—*The Olendorf brothers.*

The prisoners captured by Maj. Ross and party, suffered much on their way to Canada from the cold, being seventeen days journeying to the Genesee valley, during which time they were compelled to live almost wholly on a stinted allowance of horse-flesh. Some of the prisoners wintered in the Genesee valley, and were taken to Niagara the following March. Keller, one of the Curry Town prisoners, on arriving at Niagara, was sold, and one Countryman, a native of the Mohawk valley, then an officer in the British service, was his purchaser. In June he was sent to Rebel Island, near Montreal; in November, to Halifax; thence to Nova Scotia, and finally to Boston, where he was exchanged, and left to foot it home without money, as were many of the prisoners during the war. They were, however, welcomed to the table of every patriot on whom they chanced to call, and suffered little by hunger. Keller reached his family in Minden, near Fort Plain, whither they had removed in his absence, on the 24th day of December, 1782. Van Epps, a fellow prisoner, again reached home about eighteen months after his capture, and the rest of the prisoners, taken that fall, either returned at the time he did, or at subsequent periods, as they were confined in different places.—*Keller and Van Epps.*

About the 1st of November, 1781, a party of the enemy under Joseph Brant, and Capt. Adam Crysler, a former resident of that vicinity, entered Vrooman's Land early in the morning, near the residence of Peter Vrooman, a little distance from the Upper Schoharie fort. Isaac Vrooman, father of Peter, had removed his family below the Helleberg some time before, and had, at the time of which I am writing, visited his son to procure his aid in moving his family back to his old residence in Schoharie. A few days before the arrival of his father, Peter had removed from a hut he occupied at the fort, to his dwelling, which he intended should be his winter quarters, thinking the season so far advanced that the enemy would not re-appear that fall.

Peter was a self-taught blacksmith, and had a little shop near his house, where he usually did his own horse-shoeing. It was found necessary, previous to leaving home, to set several shoes; and the father rose before daylight, carried a shovel of coals from the house to the shop, and made a fire. As it began to get light, the old gentleman left the shop, as was supposed, to call his son. On his way two guns were fired at him—the one by the tory chieftain, and the other by an Indian warrior beside him. The door of Vrooman's dwelling was on the side opposite the shop, and the son, already up, hearing the report of the two guns, and rightly conjecturing the cause, sprang out of his house, and ran towards the fort, a few hundred yards distant. He had gone but a short distance from his house, when he was discovered, fired upon, and hotly pursued by several Indians, but reached the fort in safety.

The wife of the younger Vrooman, on hearing the guns, ran up stairs, and from a chamber window saw an Indian in the act of tearing off the scalp of the elder Vrooman, who was then on his hands and knees, bellowing most piteously. After the scalp was torn off, the Indian, who was the reader's old acquaintance, Seth's Henry, dispatched his victim with a war club, cut his throat, and with the bloody knife added another notch on the club, to the record of the many scalps he had taken in the war; after which he laid it upon the body of the murdered man and left him. The reader will remember that this Schoharie chief left a war-club in

the same neighborhood some time before, which recorded a most startling account of his prowess and cruelty ; the record was much larger at a later period, and I think it hardly possible that an equal number of scalps and prisoners were made during the war by any other individual Indian. When the enemy entered Vrooman's house for plunder, Mrs. Vrooman went below, and being known to several of the Indians, she addressed them in their own dialect, and they spared her life, probably from the recollection of former kindness.

The invaders did not linger long in the vicinity of the fort, but advanced up the river, appropriating to their own use whatever was attainable. Soon after the arrival of Peter Vrooman, a party of fifteen or twenty were dispatched from the fort in pursuit of the foe, of whose numbers they were totally ignorant. Who commanded this American scout is unknown, but Timothy Murphy is said to have had its principal direction. They proceeded with alacrity along the eastern shore of the Schoharie, and when on "Bouck's Island," a few rods above the present residence of Gov. Bouck, they were fired upon by the enemy, who were concealed on the bank of the river above Panther mountain, and one of their number, Derrick [Richard] Haggidorn, mortally wounded. The Americans returned the fire and retreated. As Haggidorn fell, he called to his companions not to leave him to a merciless foe ; whereupon Murphy addressed his brave comrades nearly as follows : " My boys, every ball was not moulded to hit, let us save him."\* He was then taken between two of his friends and borne off in safety to the fort, where he died the next day, much lamented, as he had been a patriotic and faithful soldier.

\* The remark of Murphy, that *every ball was not moulded to hit*, was peculiarly applicable to his own case. He was almost constantly exposed in border wars from the beginning to the close of the Revolution, ever seeking the post of danger—the front rank, if an enemy was near, and probably, at the lowest estimate, *had several hundred bullets fired at him by good marksmen, without ever receiving the slightest wound*. To look back on the multiplied dangers he passed through, without injury—but a few of which have come down to the writer in a tangible form—it would almost seem as though fortune had her particular favorites.

Whether the enemy received any injury from the return fire of Murphy and party was unknown; but not long after, Jacob Frimire, a soldier who was out on a hunt from the Upper fort, found the body of a white man sitting against a tree, with his gun and equipments by him; supposed to have been a tory under Brant and Crysler, and to have been mortally wounded by the scout on Bouck's Island: the appearance of the body justifying the belief that he had been dead about that length of time. The dead man, who had been shot through the body, was found a mile or more from where the skirmish had taken place, near where a brook intersected the mill stream known as Bouck's saw mill creek: the brook was afterwards called *dead man's creek*.

As the enemy were concealed, their number was still unknown on the return of Murphy and party, but enough having been seen and heard to judge somewhat correctly of their strength, Colonel Vrooman dispatched Capt. Hager with fifteen or twenty Schoharie rangers, and a company of eastern troops, numbering about sixty men, under Capt. Hale. The command of the Americans was given to Capt. Hager, who, taking two or three days' provisions, moved up the river. The enemy, as was afterwards ascertained, numbered between sixty and seventy Indians and tories, under the command of Brant and Crysler. One of the principal objects of the invasion was, the removal to Canada of Crysler's family, which, up to this time had remained in Brakabeen.

Capt. Hager halted his men just at dark near the present tavern stand of Wm. Fink, where they encamped in a pine grove beside the road. The night was a very cold one, and the troops suffered considerably, deeming it imprudent to build fires in the night near an enemy whose strength they did not know.\* Three hours be-

\* Johan Jost Dietz and Peter Vrooman, the former a colonel and the latter a major of militia after the war, were left at the place of encampment, in charge of a keg of rum and a quantity of provisions, to await the return of the troops: and well did they perform their duty, as they assured the writer when together in 1837; being unable a part of the time to leave the trust if they would, lest others who liked "the striped pig" should fall in with them and bear off the keg, they secured a liberal share of its contents within their own stomachs.



fore the dawn of day, the pursuit was renewed : and near the residence of the late Gen. Patchin, the Americans ascended the mountain by a narrow and uneven road ; overhung by a heavy growth of hemlock. As the night was cloudy and dark, the progress of the troops was necessarily slow. On arriving at the forks of the roads which led, one to Harpersfield and the other to Lake Utsayantho, they halted, struck up fires and ate breakfast : it being then about daylight. It was discovered that the enemy had gone towards the lake, and a consultation now took place between the officers about the road to be pursued. Capt. Hager was in favor of making a rapid march on the Harpersfield route and, if possible, head the enemy at a favorable place for surprise ; but was overruled and the trail of the enemy followed.

Capt. Hager and his men had pursued the enemy but a short distance on the Lake road, before their approach was known to the latter, who made preparations to receive them. About a mile from the place of breakfasting, they met two of Capt. Hager's horses hopped together, which the enemy had taken the preceding day. The captain who was walking in front of his men at the time, with the cautious Murphy beside him, stepped up to the horses and cut the cord which fastened them together. They had proceeded but a little way farther, when they heard the whoop of several savages, whom they supposed were in search of the horses. A rapid march soon brought the Americans where the enemy had encamped the previous night ; seven large fires being still burning. Several horses laden with plunder and a number of cattle were abandoned by the Indians near the fire.

On arriving at the lake, the road, which was little more than an Indian foot path, ran along its margin. A ridge of land extended nearly to the Lake where the Americans were approaching, and as they were rising the eminence, the enemy who were concealed near its summit, discharged upon them a volley of balls. The instant they fired, Capt. Hager commanded Hale, who was marching in the rear to "*flank to the right and march on !*" Hager intended to bring the enemy between his command and the lake ; but Hale, instead of obeying the order, faced to the right about,



and followed by his men with one noble exception, retreated in double-quick time. Brant and his destructives seeing the cowardly retreat of Hale and his men, advanced to meet Hager, who was left with less than twenty men to resist a force more than triple his own. The little band had taken trees, and were beginning to return the enemy's fire at the time Hale retreated; but seeing that they must soon be entirely surrounded if they attempted to maintain their position, their brave leader ordered a retreat. On leaving the ground, they were necessarily exposed to the fire of the enemy, and Sacket, a Bostonian, (the exception to Hale's men,) sealed his bravery with his blood, as did Joachim Van Valkenberg,\* one of Capt. Hager's followers. Joseph, a brother of Capt. Hager was also wounded severely in the right shoulder, but the ball was extracted and he subsequently recovered. It was thought by the Americans at the time a most providential circumstance, that, exposed as they were in their retreat to the fire of so many good marksmen, only two should have been killed. Capt. Hager, with Murphy still at his side, then ran to overtake the cowardly Hale; and after a chase of about five hundred yards overtook him: as both of them gained his front, they placed the muzzles of their rifles at his breast, and the captain in a voice of thunder exclaimed, "*Attempt to run another step and you are a dead man!*"

Thus unexpectedly brought to a stand, Hale, at the order of Capt. Hager, which he was not in a situation a second time to

\* The following anecdote was related to the author by *Lydia Kline*, a sister of Van Valkenberg. Among the Indians who returned to Schoharie, after the war, was one who called at the house of Henry, a brother of Van Valkenberg above named, having with him a gun. Henry instantly recognized the gun as that of his deceased brother, and taking it up he asked the Indian where he got it. He replied that he had killed a man at the 'Little Lake,' and thus obtained it. Said Henry, "This is my gun, and I shall keep it." The red man was unwilling to concede that point, it being as he believed a lawful prize from the fortune of war. Henry however retained the gun, and told the Indian to take it from his grasp and he should have it. Mortified at thus losing his gun, the Indian left the house and went into a swamp near by. Not long after this event the body of a dead Indian was discovered in this swamp, but the cause of his death, or by whose hand he had fallen, remained among the mysteries of the times.

misunderstand, faced about and began to retrace his steps. But the golden moment to punish the invaders of Schoharie and avenge the murder of Vrooman, was past. Brant, to whom possibly the actual force under Capt. Hager was known, having, as before remarked, a French war acquaintance with the latter, and knowing what resistance he might expect if a stand was effected by him, chose, encumbered as he was with Crysler's family, to make a rapid march to the Susquehanna. The two soldiers who fell near the lake were scalped by the foe.

Having restored order and infused a share of his own fearless spirit into his ranks, Capt. Hager was about to renew the pursuit as Col. Vrooman arrived upon the ground, with forty men drawn from the Lower fort. After a short consultation, the chase was continued, but still in ignorance as to the enemy's numbers; after proceeding about two miles and losing all trace of their footsteps, they having left the usual path for some unknown route, the pursuit was abandoned, and the troops returned to Schoharie.—*Manuscript of Judge Hager, one of the pursuing party.*

In the latter part of the war, supposed in the year 1781, *six Tories*, who had threaded the forests from Niagara to Schoharie in the hope of making a profitable adventure, were concealed in and around the settlements for a week or more. They were led by Nicholas Snyder, a former resident of the valley and neighbor of my informant *Jacob Enders*, whose person they thought to secure. The party were secreted in a small swamp several days, near the dwelling of William Enders his father, on Foxes creek. After awaiting in vain nearly a week for a sight of Jacob's person, two of the number dressed in Continental clothes, went to the house of Enders, and supposed to be *patriots*, were very kindly treated: they enquired of Mr. Enders, while partaking of his hospitality, *if he had no sons to aid him in his farming!* He replied that he had a son, *who was then in the nine months' service at the Middle fort.*

Mortified at being thus foiled in their attempts, the Tories then sought to surprise and capture Capt. Stubrach, to effect which they laid in wait for him some time under a bridge in Kneiskern's

dorf; but the captain was not to be caught napping, and the enterprise proved abortive.

Capt. Henry Eckler, late of Warren, Herkimer county, was out with a friend in the summer of 1781, in the vicinity of Fort Herkimer, and unexpectedly fell in with Brant and a party of his warriors. The chief, who was well acquainted with Captain E., addressed him by name, and asked him if he would surrender himself his prisoner. "*Not by a d—d sight, as long as I have legs to run!*" and suiting the action to the word, he turned and fled at the top of his speed, and his companion with him. The surprise took place near a piece of woods, into which the fugitives ran, pursued by a band of yelling savages. Eckler had proceeded but a little distance in the woods, when he found it would be impossible for him to run far with the speed requisite for his escape by flight; and passing over a knoll which hid him from the observation of his pursuers, he entered, head first, a cavity at the root of a wind-fallen tree. He found its depth insufficient, however, to conceal his whole person, and like a young ostrich or partridge, that, with its head concealed, feels secure, if it remains still, he resolved to keep silence and trust to Providence for the issue. The party pursuing soon arrived upon the knoll, and halted almost over him to catch another glimpse of his retiring form. But they looked in vain; and while they stood there, and he heard their conversation, he expected every moment would be his last, as he was sure if his foes looked down they could not fail to see at least one half his person. He thought, as he afterwards told his friends, that had Brant, who also came upon the bank above him while he was thus concealed, but listened, he must have heard his heart beat, as it felt in his breast like the thumping of a hammer. Supposing Eckler had fled in an opposite direction, his pursuers overlooked his place of concealment, and expressing to each other their surprise at his sudden exit, and declaring that a *spirit* had helped him escape, they withdrew, when he backed out of his hiding place, and regained his home in safety. His comrade also effected his escape uninjured, although he had a long and strong race for his liberty.—*Dr. Z. W. Bingham, who also communicated the facts detailed in the next succeeding adventure.*

In the fall of 1781, a man was captured in the vicinity of Fort Plank, a picketed block-house, situated in the western part of the present town of Minden, some three miles westward of Fort Plain.\* The prisoner of whom I speak was captured by seven Indians, and hurried off into the wilderness. At night the party halted at a deserted log tenement in that part of Danube known as Otsquago,† or as usually spoken, the Squawke. As the weather was cold the Indians made a fire, and after partaking of a scanty supper, gathered round it to talk over the result thus far of their expedition. They had, as they stated, taken but a few scalps, very little plunder, and but one prisoner, who, they concluded, was hardly worth taking to Canada alone. They there resolved to have a *pow-wow* in the morning, kill and scalp the prisoner, return toward the Mohawk, and seek among the defenceless or unguarded whom they might plunder or slay.

The enemy, after discussing thus freely their future plans in the Mohawk dialect, laid down upon the floor to rest, with their feet to the fire. The prisoner was compelled to lie down between two Indians, under cords fastened to their bodies, which crossed his person over the breast and thighs, and not long after, all, save the prisoner, were in a sound slumber. If the Indians were soon dreaming of rich hunting grounds, human scalps, "beauty and booty," the case was far otherwise with the poor captive, who understood every word they had said, and had listened with horror to his own approaching fate. Believing his foes all under the padlock of Morpheus, he began to tax his ingenuity for some means of escape. Hope of procuring those means was fast fading from his excited mind, which already began to suffer the imaginary pangs of savage torture, when, in moving his hand upon the floor, it accidentally rested upon a fragment of broken window-glass.

\*Col. Stone, with several other writers, has fallen into the error of supposing Fort Plank but another name for Fort Plain.

†This is the Indian name for the creek which runs into the Mohawk at Ft. Plain, and signifies "*The Springs*," alluding to its sources.—Wagner.

No sooner did the prisoner seize the glass, than a ray of hope entered his bosom, and with the frail assistant he instantly set about regaining his liberty. He commenced severing the rope across his breast, and soon it was stranded. The moment was one of intense excitement; he knew that it was the usual custom for one or more of an Indian party to keep watch and prevent the escape of their prisoners. Was he then watched? Should he go on, with the possibility of hastening his own doom, or wait and see if some remarkable interposition of Providence might save him? A monitor within whispered, "Faith without works is dead," and after a little pause in his efforts, he resumed them, and soon had parted another strand; and as no movement was made, he tremblingly cut another; it was the last, and as it yielded he sat up. He then was enabled to take a midnight view of the group around him, in the feeble light reflected from the moon through a small window of a single sash. The enemy still appeared to sleep, and he soon separated the cord across his limbs. He then advanced to the fire and raked open the coals, which reflected their partial rays upon the painted visages of those misguided heathen, whom British gold had bribed to deeds of damning darkness; and being fully satisfied that all were sound asleep, he approached the door.

The Indians had a large watch dog outside the house. He cautiously opened the door, sprang out and ran, and as he had anticipated, the dog was yelling at his heels. He had about twenty rods to run across a cleared field before he could reach the woods: and as he neared them he looked back, and in the clear light of a full moon, saw the Indians all in pursuit. As he neared the forest, they all drew up their rifles and fired upon him, at which instant a strong vine caught his foot and he fell to the ground. The volley of balls passed over him, and bounding to his feet, he gained the beechen shade. Not far from where he entered, he had noticed the preceding evening a large hollow log, and on coming to it, he sought safety within in. The dog, at first, ran several rods past the log, which served to mislead the



party, but soon returned near it, and ceased barking without a visit to the entrance of the captive's retreat.

The Indians sat down over him, and talked about their prisoner's escape. They finally came to the conclusion that he had either ascended a tree near, or that the *devil* had aided him in his escape, which to them appeared the most reasonable conclusion. As morning was approaching, they determined on taking an early breakfast and returning to the river settlements, leaving one of their number to keep a vigilant watch in that neighborhood for their captive until afternoon of the following day, when he was to join his fellows at a designated place. This plan settled, an Indian proceeded to an adjoining field, where a small flock of sheep had not escaped their notice, and shot one of them. While enough of the mutton was dressing to satisfy their immediate wants, others of the party struck up a fire, which they chanced, most unfortunately for his comfort, to build against the log, *directly opposite their lost prisoner*. The heat became almost intolerable to the tenant of the fallen basswood, before the meat was cooked—besides, the smoke and steam which found their way through the worm holes and cracks, had nearly suffocated him, ere he could sufficiently stop their ingress, which was done by thrusting a quantity of leaves and part of his own clothing into the crannies. A cough, which he knew would insure his death, he found it most difficult to avoid: to back out of his hiding place would also seal his fate, while to remain in it much longer, he felt conscious, would render his situation, to say the least, *not enviable*.

After suffering most acutely in body and mind for a time, the prisoner (who was again such by accident,) found his miseries alleviated when the Indians began to eat, as they then let the fire burn down, and did not again replenish it. After they had dispatched their breakfast of mutton, the prisoner heard the leader caution the one left to watch in that vicinity to be wary, and soon heard the retiring footsteps of the rest of the party. Often during the morning, the watchman was seated or standing over him. Not having heard the Indian for some time, and believing the hour of his espionage past, he cautiously crept out of the log; and find-

ing himself alone, being prepared by fasting and steaming for a good race, he drew a bee-line for Fort Plank, which he reached in safety : believing, as he afterwards stated, *that all the Indians in the state could not have overtaken him in his homeward flight.*

The events of the year 1781, are among the most important during the war, and gave the seal to American independence. In the early part of the year, the southern states became the theatre of war, and Gen. Greene, who had succeeded Gates after his southern disasters, aided by Morgan, Lee, Marion, Sumpter, and other brave officers, fought many battles with skill and alternate success to the American arms. On the 19th of January, Generals Greene and Morgan met and defeated, with an inferior numerical force, mostly militia, Col. Tarleton with the flower of the British army. Not long after, Lee and Pickens—the latter a militia officer—fell in, by accident, near the branches of the Haw river, with a body of royalists on their way to join Col. Tarleton, and killed upwards of two hundred of their number. On the 15th of March, Gen. Greene met Lord Cornwallis near Guilford Court House, and although victory several times perched upon the *spangled banner*, the Americans were finally compelled to retreat—with a loss, however, less than that of the victors. On the 25th April, the battle of Camden was fought, between the armies under General Greene and Lord Rawdon, when fortune again showed herself a fickle goddess—siding, in the latter part of the action, with the foes of freedom. The killed and wounded on each side was between two and three hundred. The vigilance of the prudent though daring Greene, and the spirit with which the British were every where met at the south by the yeomanry of the land, caused them, by the early part of June, to abandon nearly all of their line of military posts in the Carolinas, and concentrate their forces. Probably in no other section of the union were the friends of liberty and royalty more equally divided : or was a spirit of bitter acrimony and rancorous hostility more vividly manifested during the war, than in the Carolinas in the summer of 1781. Indeed, many of their most valuable citizens were sacrificed in a spirit of partisan strife or retaliation. The last important engagement in

South Carolina, took place on the 8th of September, at Eutaw Springs, between the troops under Gen. Greene and Lieut. Col. Stewart. This was one of the most bloody battles during the war for the numbers engaged, and was fairly won by the Americans; but in their retreat, a body of the British entering a large brick house, kept their pursuers in check until the officers could rally the fugitives: who returned to the charge, and in turn compelled the Americans to retreat; which was done in good order, and the wounded borne from the field. The armies were each 2000 strong when the action began. The Americans lost in killed and wounded 550 men, and the enemy about 700.

Early in the season the traitor Arnold was sent with an army into Virginia. In this expedition, Arnold destroyed, by conflagration and otherwise, much property, public and private, at Richmond, Westham, Smithfield, and some other places. While the traitor was thus serving his new master, Washington concerted a plan for his capture—but the French fleet not co-operating with Gen. Lafayette, to whom was entrusted the enterprise, it proved abortive. Arnold was soon after superseded by Gen. Phillips, who sailed up James river, destroying much property at Boswell's Ferry, City Point, Petersburg, and Manchester.

In May, a project was formed by Gen. Washington and other officers assembled at Wethersfield, Connecticut, to attempt the recovery of New York city. The French fleet, under Count de Grasse, expected to co-operate by water, arriving in Chesapeake bay, the contemplated siege of New York was abandoned, and the capture of Lord Cornwallis, who was strongly fortified at Yorktown, undertaken. The siege of the place began about the 1st of October, and on the 19th, Cornwallis and his army of eight or nine thousand men, surrendered themselves prisoners of war to the American and French armies, with a park of 160 pieces of artillery, mostly brass. The enemy's naval force in the harbor was assigned to the Count de Grasse, and the land forces to Gen. Washington. The loss of a second entire army inclined Britain to think of making a peace. This great victory was celebrated

throughout the Union with festivals and rejoicings, and a day of *national* thanksgiving was appointed.

The destination of the American army was so judiciously concealed from Sir Henry Clinton, commanding at New York, that Washington was treading a southern soil when that officer supposed him in his own neighborhood.

A fact attendant on the capture of Cornwallis, deserves a notice. It was the usual custom in the Revolution, when one army was vanquished by another, to have the standards borne by lieutenants and transferred to officers of the same rank. At the surrender of the troops at Yorktown, it was observed that the British flags were in the hands of orderly sergeants. Two officers of that grade, James Williamson of the New York, and a man named Brush, of the Connecticut troops, were quickly selected to perform this honorable duty, in consideration of services rendered during the seige, to evidence which each wore on his person the soldier's *mark of honor*. The British army passed between files of American troops, and as the standards reached Williamson and Brush, they received, furled, and laid them down. When the first standard-bearer reached Williamson (from whom these facts were derived) he was ordered by him to halt. "*Sir,*" said he, "*I will receive your standard.*" The British orderly at first hesitated, and seemed not a little surprised that he was to deliver it to a knotted officer, but with a very graceful salute he presented it and passed on. The old veteran remarked that he had quite a pile of British flags when the vanquished army had all passed. It was afterwards supposed that the enemy designed, by delivering their ensigns through non-commissioned to subaltern officers, to cast a slur upon the stars of America.\*

\* The following anecdotes were attendant on the march of the American army to and from Yorktown. At Baltimore, one Gregg, who belonged to Col. Cortlandt's regiment of New York troops, was flogged eight hundred lashes. Several complaints having been rendered to the colonel that the soldiers were stealing from each other; in order to stop the habit effectually, he gave orders that the first one guilty of theft should receive fifty lashes for the value of every shilling stolen. A missing shirt was found shortly after in Gregg's knapsack, which two of his fellow soldiers adjudged to be worth *two dollars*. Poor Gregg was literally flayed. He lingered a long time between life and



Chagrined at the turn affairs had taken at the south, Clinton sent the traitor Arnold on an embassy of destruction to New London, Ct. Fort Griswold, situated on elevated ground in Groton, on the east side of the Thames, nearly opposite, commanded the

death, but finally recovered. It turned out in the end that a rascally soldier had stolen the garment, and placed it in Gregg's knapsack on purpose to see him flogged.—*James Williamson.*

Cady Larey one day stole a turkey, and put it in the knapsack of a fellow soldier named Berrian, expecting, no doubt, to feast on it. It was discovered, and Col. Cortlandt sentenced Berrian to receive a severe whipping for the theft. His back was bared, and as the lash was about to descend upon it, Larey, conscience-stricken, advanced into the ring and confessed the crime—declaring that if any one deserved a flogging it was himself. The act of confession was so manly, that Col. C. forgave them both.—*Williamson.*

All classes could safely be trusted with secrets in the Revolution. A cheese having one day disappeared in an unaccountable manner in a New England regiment, great search was made for it, but in vain. Among others examined was a faithful negro waiter to one of the officers, who was interrogated, and replied much as follows: "Jack, have you seen any one steal a cheese?" "No, massa; me no see any one steal chee." "Have you seen a cheese in the hands of any one?" "No, massa." "Well, Jack, have you seen any cheese?" "Why, ye-ye-yes massa, me see a chee go by, but nobody wid em."—*Capt. Eben Williams.*

At Baltimore the regiment of Col. Cortlandt embarked in a vessel, and after the troops were all on board, the colonel gave strict orders that no one should go on shore without his permission. The night following, Larey and Berrian, the two soldiers mentioned in another anecdote, yielding to a temptation to violate their officer's commands, which their love of liquor prompted, swam ashore. While returning to the ship, Larey was drowned, but his equally boozy companion was discovered floundering in the water, taken on board, and instantly cited before his commander. He confessed his guilt, and at the mention of his companion's name began to cry. "Why do you cry?" demanded the colonel. "Because poor Larey was drowned," he replied; "for about his neck was tied a canteen—eh! of as good brandy as ever a man tasted—eh." The colonel finally forgave Berrian because of his penitence and great sorrow for the loss of his companion and the precious jewel about his neck—but admonished him and his fellow soldiers never to be guilty of another act of disobedience, if they would not share the fate of poor Larey, who could never drink his own brandy.—*Williamson.*

On the return march of Colonel Cortlandt's regiment from York Town, a gentleman near whose house it had encamped, complained in the evening to Colonel C., that his watch had been stolen by a soldier. Secrecy was enjoined until the troops were paraded to march in the morning, when a rigid search was made of the person and knapsack of every soldier in the regiment, but the search was in vain, and the army moved forward. Some days after, the watch was discovered on the person of a soldier, who was publicly whip-



city; and in order to rifle the latter it became necessary to capture the former. For this object, a large body of men under Lt. Col. Eyre were dispatched; but they were repelled with spirit by its inmates, about 120 men, mostly militia, assembled in its vicinity. The Americans were too few to resist so large a force, and the works were finally carried; but not until, according to Arnold's official account, 48 of the assailants were slain, and 145 wounded, many mortally. Numbers were killed with cold shot thrown from the ramparts. The Americans lost but a few men until after the works were carried and they had grounded their arms, when about seventy of their number were brutally massacred, and nearly all the rest wounded; several are said to have escaped injury by hugging British soldiers, so as to endanger the lives of the latter if those of the former were attempted. One man, who fled from the fort as the enemy entered, was shot at with some others also escaping, and falling uninjured, he remained in the grass feigning himself dead, until the enemy withdrew, when he joined his friends. As Maj. Montgomery entered the fort, (Col. Eyre, his superior, being wounded) he asked who commanded it. The brave Lt. Col. William Ledyard responded very civilly, "I once had that honor, the command is now yours:" presenting at the same time the hilt of his sword. The brutal major seized it, and with the spirit of a demon, passed it through the vitals of the unarmed giver. An American officer next in command to Ledyard, and standing near him at the time, revenged the act by cutting down Montgomery, but was in turn slaughtered. The command of the enemy then devolved on Maj. Bromfield. The dastardly example of the officers was followed by an indiscriminate slaughter of the unresisting soldiery. We talk of the savage massacres of Cherry-Valley and Wyoming—here was a more than *savage* massacre, for it was committed by

ped for its theft. Exhibiting it exultingly afterwards, he exclaimed—"Who would not take a flogging for such a watch as this?"

When asked how he had managed to conceal the watch, the rogue said he was about to bake a bread-cake as he obtained it, and putting it within the dough, baked it in. The bread was in his knapsack when searched, but no one thought of breaking the loaf to find a concealed treasure.—*Williamson*.

a people claiming to be *civilized*. In vindication of the British character, it has been stated that the Americans continued the fight after they had struck their colors. This however is not true : the flag-staff upon the walls was more than once shot off by the enemy, but the flag was waving above them when they carried the fortress. A regiment of militia under Col. Gallup, who witnessed the whole transaction at a distance of one mile from the fort, would not march to its rescue. Had he led his men into the fort, as a sense of duty should have prompted, the British could not have taken it. Ledyard sent a messenger to Gallup to march into the fort to his assistance when the enemy were landing, but the latter pretended not to have received the message. Gallup was tried by court martial for his want of bravery on the occasion, and broken of his office.

The enemy while in possession of the fort, loaded an ox-cart which chanced to be near, with wounded Americans, and started it down the declivity with the intention of running it into the river, but it struck a large apple-tree after gaining considerable velocity, and thwarted their merciless intention. The shock when it struck was tremendous, and several of the bleeding soldiers were killed outright. One Stevens who was in it at the time with a broken thigh, and was nearly killed by the *shock*, afterwards stated *no one could conceive the acuteness of his suffering when the cart struck the tree*. The enemy after burying their own dead, spiking or destroying the cannon, and laying a train of powder to the magazine, left the fort. The explosion was however prevented, as has been stated by some previous writer, by a wounded soldier who crawled upon the train, and saturated it with his own life-blood so that it did not communicate with the magazine. The British burnt New-London, destroyed some shipping in the harbor, and embarked for New-York. Soon after they left the fort, the Americans in the neighborhood entered it. The former had buried their dead but slightly, with their clothes on. The Americans, who found it difficult to obtain clothing, dug up their dead foes ; divested them of their apparel ; dug deeper graves, and again buried them ; interring also their fallen countrymen. Facts

from *Mr. Ephraim F. Simms*, of Otsego county, who obtained them at the request of the author, from Capt. Peckham Maine, a former resident of that county. The latter, then a lad, entered Fort Griswold soon after the enemy left it, and aided in stripping and burying the dead.

A patriotic old lady is still living in the vicinity of this fort, or was but recently, who was in it at the time it fell into the hands of the British, of whom the following anecdote is related. As the enemy were approaching the fortress, one of the guns was about to become useless for the want of wadding; when our heroine loosening a flannel petticoat on her person, threw it to the cartridge-man with the exclamation, "this will enable you to fire a few shots more!" The garment was torn up, and the gun continued its fearful execution upon the foeman. In consequence of the patriotic deed related, this old lady has been visited by many distinguished individuals, among whom, if I mistake not, are numbered several Presidents of the United States.—*Rev. J. M. Van Buren.*

## CHAPTER XVII.

Although the preceding year had closed with a cessation of hostilities, predatory border enterprises were continued during the summer of 1782.

Christopher P. Yates, Esq., who was one of the best informed and most efficient patriots in the Mohawk valley, in a letter dated "Freyburg, 22d March, 1782," written to Col. H. Frey,\* a brother-in-law, respecting timber, thus observes :

"We have already had three different inroads from the enemy, which you have doubtless heard before. The last was at Bowman's kill, from whence they took three children of McFee's family. If they act upon the same principle as the last year, which from their conduct is evident, their intention in coming to the creek so early was to clear it of all inhabitants, that they might pass unobserved. I fear that in the course of the present year they will infest us chiefly on the south side of the river, and in small parties: for this reason I think our bush to be in more danger than it has yet been. God grant that I may be wrong."

\* *Col. Stone* in the *Life of Brant*, speaking of the acts of the first meeting of the Palatine district, thus observes—"The original draft of the proceedings of that meeting is yet in existence, in the hand-writing of Colonel Hendrick Frey, a patriot who lived to a great age, and is but recently deceased." "*This*," says the memoranda of H. F. Yates, "*is a total and entire mistake*. The draft was made by Christopher P. Yates, and is in his hand writing. Col. Stone meant John, instead of Hendrick Frey. The latter was a tory, and was one of the disaffected sent by the Tryon County Committee to Hartford, Connecticut. The whole of those papers, [the early correspondence of the Tryon County Committee,] were drawn and written by C. P. Yates. He was the only scholar among them; and was a man of strong mind, much reading, and a very forcible writer. He was the competitor at the bar of Montgomery County, of the late Abram Van Vechten, from the year 1787, till the Legislature by law, prevented the clerks from practising law in their respective counties."

As in the Schoharie, so it was in the Mohawk valley in the Revolution.

In the spring of this year, a party of fifteen Indians proceeded by a circuitous route through the Schoharie settlements, without committing any hostile act to Beaver-dam, Albany county, where was a small settlement, a grist-mill, &c. The settlers were mostly Tories in this vicinity, except the Dietzes and Weidmans. To destroy the family of Johannes Dietz, an old gentleman who lived between the mill and a Scotch settlement at Rensselaerville, was the especial object of the invaders in making their tedious journey. The family consisted of the old gentleman and his wife, his son Capt. William Dietz and wife, four children of the latter, a servant girl, and a lad named John Bryce, whose parents lived at Rensselaerville.

The enemy arrived at Dietz's just before night, and surprised and killed all the family, except Capt. Dietz and young Bryce, then 12 or 14 years old. Robert Bryce, a brother of John, 11 years old, had been sent on horseback that day to the mill at Beaver-dam with a grist, in company with several other lads on the same errand. Their grain was ground, but as it was nearly sun-

Many of the most influential families were not only related to each other, but were often divided in their political opinions; and not unfrequently members were found in hostile array. Major Frey had a brother named Bernard, who joined the enemy, and with some of his former neighbors of the Mohawk valley, doubtless assisted in desolating portions of it. Colonel Hendrick Frey married a sister of General Herkimer, and his patriot brother, Major Frey, married another relative of the General. The wife of Christopher P. Yates was the youngest sister of the Freys named. The Finks, Coxes, Klocks, Bellingers, Parises, Feeters, Nellises, Foxes, Groses, Eckers, Wagners, Seebers, Helmers, Eisenlords, Snells, (seven men of this name were killed in the Oriskany battle.—*Jour. of N. Y. Congress*,) Nestells, Sprakers, Zielies, Van Alstynes, Roofs, Van Slycks, Dievendorfs, Fondas, Veeders, Visschers, Harpers, Putmans, Quackenbosses, Van Eppses, Wemples, Hansons and Groats were also among the patriotic German and Dutch citizens of the Mohawk valley; not a few of whom were connected by ties of consanguinity.

Of Gen. Herkimer, it may be well here to remark, that he was much better informed than many suppose. Says the manuscript of Yates, "I claim not for the General, that he was versed in Latin and Greek, or in the philosophy of the German schools; but I claim for him, that no German emigrant was better read in the history of the Protestant reformation, and in the philosophy of the Bible, than General Herkimer." I may add, in truth, he possessed largely those sterling qualities, good common sense, sympathy, honor, and a spirit of bravery in a just cause, unrivalled by that of a Montgomery or De Kalb.



down they all concluded to tarry with the miller over night, except Bryce, who resolved to return as far as Dietz's, three miles toward his home, and stay with his brother. He arrived just at twilight near the house, when an Indian sprang from a covert by the road-side, and seized his bridle-reins. A short time before his arrival, the family had been led out of the house to be murdered, agreeable to a savage custom, perhaps that their mangled remains may terrify surviving friends; and as the horse, with Robert still on him, was led near the house, the lad discovered the disfigured bodies of all the family, except Capt. Dietz and his own brother, who were tied to a tree near by.

The enemy, after plundering the dwelling of such articles as they desired, set it on fire, and, with the outbuildings, it was soon reduced to ashes. Securing the scalps of the eight bleeding victims, or *sixty-four dollars worth* of American blood in an English market—after placing their plunder on a number of horses belonging to the Dietzes, and that of young Bryce, on which his grist was retained for food—they started forward on their tedious journey to Canada. They traveled about two miles and encamped for the night, distant from the paternal house of the Bryce boys about a mile. Little did their parents dream of the fate and future prospects of their sons. By dawn of day next morning, the journey was resumed. The Indians desired to take the southern route to Niagara, and hoped to gain the sources of the Schoharie without molestation. Tidings of the untimely fate of this family were next day communicated to the Schoharie forts, and a body of troops was dispatched by Col. Vrooman in pursuit.

Lieut. John Jost Dietz, a relative of the family, who was sent from the Lower fort with a party to bury the dead, met them in a wagon owned by a neighbor. The bodies had been mutilated by hogs, and presented a most revolting appearance. They were all deposited in one grave, in a yard attached to a small Reformed Dutch church, then standing not far distant from the place of massacre.

Suspecting the route the invaders would take, the Americans proceeded up the river, and towards night, on the second day af-

ter the massacre, fell in with and fired upon them near the head waters of the Schoharie. Several of the Indians were wounded, but they all effected their escape with their prisoners. They however abandoned their horses and plunder at the onset, which were restored to the surviving friends of the family. The Indian who claimed ownership to the person of Robert Bryce, was badly wounded in one leg by the fire of the Schoharie troops, and being unable to keep up with the party, journeyed with his prisoner and two of his partizans at a much slower pace. On arriving at the Indian settlements in western New York, Robert was initiated into the cruel mysteries of gantlet-running: receiving a lesson in which school, on one occasion, nearly cost him his life. He was taken to Nine Mile Landing on Lake Ontario; sold to a Scotchman, who was the captain of a sloop, for fifteen dollars; was removed to Detroit, from whence he was liberated and returned home, after the proclamation of peace, in company with his brother and several hundred prisoners liberated at the same time.

The treatment of Capt. Dietz and the elder Bryce was more severe than that of Robert. Their party were greatly straightened for food on their way, and for several days lived on winter-green, birch-bark, and, possibly, a few esculent roots and wild berries. On the Susquehanna river, near the mouth of the Unadilla, a deer was shot, which providentially saved them from starving. Their progress at this period was very slow, as they were compelled daily to spend much of their time in hunting food. They journeyed through the Chemung and Genesee valleys, and at villages, the prisoners were compelled to endure the running ordeal. Added to the stripes of his foes and the gnawings of hunger, Capt. Dietz suffered the most severe mental agony. He was not only doomed to see the blood-stained scalps of his honored parents, his bosom companion and four lovely children stretched in hoops to tan in the sun, as was the custom, but often to have them slapped in his face by the Indian who bore them, in the most insulting manner.

George Warner, who was captured the same season, informed

the writer that he saw Capt. Dietz in his confinement at Niagara, and conversed with him. The latter appeared heart-stricken and in a decline, under which he sunk to the grave not long after. He told Capt. Warner (the latter was a military captain after the war) where a certain amount of money had been concealed near their dwelling. Capt. W. afterwards understood the treasure had been recovered.—*Priest's narrative and Col. Wm. Dietz of Schoharie; corroborated by others.*

Early on the morning of July 4th, Adam Vrooman (a namesake and cousin of "Pull Foot Vrooman," and son of Isaac Vrooman, who was killed the preceding fall,) went from the Upper Schoharie fort, accompanied by Peter Feeck, (the man who discovered the rear of the British army on the morning of Johnson's invasion,) to drive cattle to a pasture near the dwelling of the late Cornelius Vrooman. Feeck was driving the cattle as his companion went forward to open the gate; and as the latter was in the act of so doing, he received several bullets from a party of seven Indians and tories concealed in ambush, and fell dead. Feeck fled, and although fired at by the enemy, he reached the fort, nearly a mile distant, in safety. On the same morning, Joseph Brown, who had left the Upper fort on the same errand as had Vrooman and Feeck, was captured by the same party and hurried off to Canada. A band of rangers left the fort on the return of Feeck, and soon struck the trail of the enemy; but the latter having stolen a number of horses in the neighborhood, effected their escape.—*Mrs. Van Slyck and Josias E. Vrooman.*

On the morning of July 26th, 1782, the tory captain, Adam Crysler, accompanied by his brother William, another tory named Peter Erkert, and twenty-two Indians, appeared in Foxes creek valley. They had tarried the preceding night, as was believed, at the dwelling of a tory in the vicinity, whose family and property were left unmolested. Early in the morning the destructives approached the house of Jacob Zimmer, which was one of the first stone dwellings erected in Schoharie county.\*

\*This house, situated a little distance from the hamlet called Gallupville, which dwelling has for many years past been owned and occupied by Theo.

Jacob Zimmer, sen., was absent when the enemy arrived at his house, as was also his son Peter ; the latter, however, had not left the neighborhood. Crysler was sadly disappointed in not finding the elder Zimmer at home. His namesake was tomahawked and scalped in the presence of his wife and mother—two who could feel most keenly his loss. The women were not captured, and the enemy, after plundering the house, set it on fire, as also they did the barn, and then proceeded down the creek. The former was extinguished by the women, after the *barn-burners* had left, but the barn was reduced to ashes. Proceeding a little distance from the house, the party met Peter Zimmer, and took him prisoner. Peter enquired of his captors if they had seen his brother Jacob, and was answered that *they had left him at home with the women*, but did not tell him that the bloody trophy one of their number had secured for a British market, was the scalp of his near relative. A Hessian, who had entered New York as a soldier under Burgoyne, and who had chosen to desert and remain in the country, was at work for the Zimmers at the time of Crysler's invasion, and was also murdered, as *his* scalp would command eight dollars in Canada. Blood was said to have been visible on a stone beside the road where this poor Hessian was slain, for a great length of time afterwards.

The morning being unusually foggy, the light of Zimmer's house was not discovered by the citizens below, and as they had refrained from firing, their proximity was unsuspected.

At this period, Johannes Becker, one of the earliest German settlers on Foxes creek, was still living about two miles below Zimmer, and with or near him five sons, Joseph, major of militia, George, John, Jacob, and William ; and one daughter named

bold Hilts, unfortunately took fire on the 9th day of March, 1843, and with most of its contents soon became a heap of ruins. Mr. Zimmer was a patriot, a man of influence, and well known in the country, having been associated as patentee with John Lawyer and others in the purchase and sale of extensive tracts of land in Albany county. To secure such a prisoner (possibly one of the Schoharie council of safety at the time) was an object not to be overlooked by the tory chief ; he accordingly led his destructives to Zimmer's house. Mr. Zimmer had two sons, Jacob and Peter, living with him, who were young men grown—the former of whom had a wife also at his father's.



Maria.\* The three brothers, John, Jacob, and William Becker, went on the morning of Crysler's invasion, to work in a cornfield on the north side of the creek. Arriving at the field, they found they had but two hoes, and John, the eldest, sent William, the youngest of the three, then twenty-two years old, to the house for another hoe. He soon returned with a report that the women were hoeing a patch of cabbage, and did not like to part with it. As previously stated, many of the farmers concealed their hay and grain in the woods during the war, to avoid the enemy's fire-brand. The day before this invasion, the brothers had been cutting brush to make room for several hay stacks, and to open a road to the place, some distance from the house.

When William returned without the hoe, John told him he could go and finish the road in the woods, make bars, &c. William started, but was called back by John, who told him to stay and hoe with Jacob, saying that he would go and finish the other work himself, as then he would be sure of its being done to suit him! John was afterwards found dead, lying upon the brush he had been cutting, and appeared not to have moved after he received the blow of a tomahawk. The brim and lower part of his hat crown were cut open, and the weapon had penetrated the brain. It was supposed that an Indian had stolen up behind him unobserved, and felled him to the earth, where he scalped and left him. As the enemy went directly from Zimmer's to the field where the Becker brothers had been at work the day before, it was supposed that their place of labor had been communicated by some tory in the settlement. Soon after John had left his brothers hoeing, William discovered the enemy in the upper side of the field, approaching them, and directed Jacob's attention that way. Both at the same instant let fall their hoes and ran towards home. Rightly conjecturing that their foes would if possible cut off their retreat to the house, they ran directly to the bank of the

\* Joseph Becker had two sons, George three, John one, and Jacob four; nearly all of whom are now residents of Schoharie county. Johannes Becker died soon after the war was over, and Major Becker, his oldest son, died Aug. 21st, 1806, the latter in the 68th year of his age.



creek not far above the house, and opposite a small island that has since disappeared. At this place the stream was deep, and they had to diverge from their course to cross a log which extended from the shore to the island. They dashed down the bank with an impetus that carried them both into the water, and Jacob fell down; but regaining his feet he reached the log, crossed, and ran up on the south side of the island, hotly pursued by a single Indian, who had to make the same circuit to cross or else swim the stream—the others having gone below to head them, supposing they would run to the house. Jacob, who was closely followed by the warrior with uplifted tomahawk, on arriving at a place on the southern shore of the island, which terminated boldly, sprang down the bank and remained quiet. William ran but a few rods beyond his brother, and also secreted himself beneath the bank. The pursuing Indian ran to within a few feet of where Jacob lay, halted, and looked up the stream in vain, to catch another glimpse of the fugitives—little suspecting that one of them was almost within reach of him—near where he had last seen him, and who doubtless was still visible had he looked down. He gave up the chase, crossed the island, passing very near the concealment of William, gained the north bank of the creek, and hastened to join his companions below. The Indians did not fire on the young men, as they hoped to surprise Maj. Becker and some others near by. The brothers remained concealed until the firing began at the house, and then crossed the creek and went into the woods, east of their corn-field. When the enemy left the valley, they passed so near the concealed brothers, that the latter distinctly heard them talk.

Maj. Becker, at that period, owned and occupied a substantial stone dwelling, the present residence of his son Henry, late a judge of the county; and near it stood a grist mill owned by him, which was one of the earliest erected mills in Schoharie county. The dwelling is pleasantly situated upon a knoll on the south side of the creek, at a little distance from the Albany road, and had at that period a gambrel roof. A hall passes through it from north to south, with a door at each end. The house contained five front

and five rear windows ; and at that time two chamber windows in the east gable end, since altered. The upper part of the house was unfinished and all in one room ; and the windows were barricaded nearly to the top with oak plank. The front door was closed up with plank, and the back door, then the only entrance to the house, strengthened by a false door also of oak, to arrest the bullets of an enemy. Just before Cryslar and his murderers arrived at Maj. Becker's, Henry, his son, then nine years old, Jacob Zimmer, jun., (nephew of the one murdered) and several other boys about the same age, had been a little distance southeast of the house to drive hogs to a pasture. On their return, and when within ten or fifteen rods of the house, one of the boys said to the rest, "*See the rifle-men over there ; they are painted like the Indians !*" The Schoharie Rangers when on a scout, were often clad much like Indians : but young Becker instantly recognized the party to be a band of savages. A few rods above the house was a small island containing perhaps an acre of ground, separated from the bank southeast of the dwelling, by a deep pool of stagnant water, over which had been felled a tree. The enemy being upon the island, had either to make quite a circuit or cross the log, which could only be done in single file. This gave the boys a little start and they ran to the house shouting, "*Indians ! Indians !*" They could easily have been shot, as they were but a few rods distant from the enemy, but the latter still hoped to surprise a militia major, which would doubtless have been done, had not the boys thus opportunely discovered their approach. Major Becker chanced to be engaged back of the house—caught the alarm, and running in seized his gun—entered the south west room—thrust it through a loop-hole above one of the windows, and fired on the invaders, breaking an Indian's arm. As the boys ran into the hall door, they encountered several children within ; and all tumbled in a heap. Major Becker's wife, who was a woman of the times, sprang to the plank door which fastened with a ring and bolt—drew it to, and held it ajar with the bolt in her hand. John Hutt, as the enemy approached, was at the western end of the house making a whiffletree. Mrs. Becker continued to hold

the door open for Hutt, who took the alarm from the furious barking of three large dogs belonging to the inmates of the house, which had met and were giving battle to the invaders, who halted to shoot them. As Hutt neared the door, a large Indian sprang to seize him; but the former raising the missile which he had retained in his hand, in a threatening manner, the latter recoiled and he sprang into the door, which was quickly bolted by the Major's Spartan wife. Had not Mrs. Becker possessed great presence of mind, and the dogs met the enemy, Hutt must have either been slain or captured by them. The shot of Maj. Becker may also have damped the ardor of the assailants. George Shell, another Schoharie soldier, was fortunately in the house at the time, and assisted in its defence.

The inmates of the dwelling consisting of the three men named, Mrs. Becker, Mrs. Adam Zimmer, possibly one or two other women, and some eight or ten children, went up stairs. The Major took his station at the south-west corner window, which commanded the enemy's approach to his barn, assigned to Hutt the eastern gable windows; and to Shell the north west window opposite his own, which commanded their approach to the mill, which stood a few rods from the house upon ground now occupied by the race-way of the present mill. The lower sash of the upper windows was also secured by plank. The enemy immediately ran round the eastern end of the house and there gained temporary shelter, some under the creek bank, some behind a fence, and others behind a small log building standing at a little distance south east of the house, used as a sort of store-room. The enemy fired numerous balls in at the windows, twenty-eight entering the window Hutt was stationed at. He was a bold, vigilant fellow, and often incurred the censure of Maj. Becker for exposing his person so much about the window, telling him that the force of the enemy was unknown, but their own was *three men*, the loss of one being one third of their strength. Hutt, however, could not be restrained by the prudent counsels of the Major, and kept constantly returning the shots of the enemy. Discovering through a cranny of the log building the hat of one of his foes,

Hutt sent a bullet through the brim of it close to the crown. This hat, it was afterwards ascertained, was on the head of Capt. Crysler. The balls of the enemy cut the air several times around the head of Hutt like the fall of hail in a hurricane, but fortunately without injury.

While a part of the invaders were firing in at the windows, one of their number was discovered by Shell crawling along the bank of the creek, which was then steeper than at present, with a brand of fire, intent on burning the mill. Shell was an eccentric fellow, and had acquired the habit of thinking out loud. Aiming his rifle at the foe, he was heard by several in the room to *think* much as follows: "*Ah! that's what you're at, is it? you go a little further and you'll catch it. Now, look out; I'll give it to you. When you get THERE, you get it; there, THERE; that will do!*" In the midst of this soliloquy, his head in motion the while, crack went his rifle; and he continued, *There, he has it; he's down; one less; you wont come again; now burn the mill will you! you infernal Indian!*"

After continuing the attack as narrated for some time, the enemy attempted to fire the building. They placed a wheel-barrow under the water conductor leading from the gutter at the north east corner of the house, to within three or four feet of the ground; and piling on combustibles, set them on fire, which quickly communicated with the wooden spout, and threatened the destruction of the building. It was impossible for the inmates of the house to fire on their foes while applying the incendiary torch, without exposing themselves to almost certain death, as some of the Indians were constantly on the look out for such an exposure. As the flame began to ascend the gutter toward the roof, Major Becker, who had no inclination to be burned alive, set about forcing off the corner of it with a piece of scantling, which fortune placed in the chamber, while his wife went into the cellar to procure water. On entering the cellar, she found an outside cellar-door upon the north side of the building, standing wide open, where the enemy might have entered had they gone to the other end of the building, which they could have done without danger.



Fastening the door, and procuring a pail of water ; she returned to the chamber.



#### MAJOR BECKER'S HOUSE INVADED BY THE ENEMY.

For a time the roof, which was nailed on with heavy wrought nails as was the ancient custom, baffled all the major's efforts, but it at length yielded, and he sank down almost exhausted. As the shingles fell to the ground, the Indians gathered them up, exclaiming, "*Yok-wah !*" *Thank you !* And added in their dialect, "*we can kindle it now.*" A hole being made, water was thrown down, and the spout was extinguished. The enemy soon had it blazing again with additional combustibles, and then remarked, also in their own tongue, "*Chock-wot de wink-wock !*". *It now burns like tobacco !* It was again put out, and again enkindled and and put out, until the spout had burned off above their reach, when they abandoned further attempts to set the house on fire. Supposing their firing would be heard at the Lower fort, some three miles distant, the assailants took French leave of the premi-



ses about nine o'clock, A. M., and buried themselves in the forest ; having been about the Becker house several hours.

The father and mother of the Becker brothers, with a child of Shell, (who was in the stone-house,) who lived just below Major Becker, and where Robert Coats now resides, taking the alarm on the enemy's approach, fled towards the fort along the southern bank of the creek. They were discovered, and fired on by the invaders, and several balls struck a fence near them, before they were out of danger ; but the enemy being so intent on the capture of Maj. Becker, and plunder of his house, did not pursue them and they escaped. Adam Zimmer and John Enders, who fled on the approach of the enemy from the vicinity of Maj. Becker's, carried news of the invasion to the Lower fort, then commanded by Captain Brown ; when a party of Americans under Lieut. Snyder sallied forth, and arrived at the scene of action just after Crysler and his followers had left. The state of the atmosphere was such, that, what is surprising, the firing at Becker's was heard at the Middle Fort, six or seven miles distant and not heard at the Lower fort, less than half as remote.

After the enemy retired from Becker's, the supposed Indian whom Shell had shot, was found to have fallen partly in the water and was not dead. He was taken into the house, and doctor Werth called to examine his wound, who pronounced it mortal ; the ball having passed diagonally through the body at the shoulders. The man was now discovered to be a painted tory instead of an Indian ; and was shortly after recognized to be Erkert, a Scotch cooper, who had made flour-barrels for Maj. Becker before the war. The major, on making the recognition, accused the tory of *ingratitude*. Said he, "when you came to me for work, I employed you, and always paid you well ; and now you come with a band of savages to murder me and my family ; plunder and and burn my buildings." The man appeared very penitent as certain death was before him ; expressed his sorrow for the course he had taken, and said "he did not then care which succeeded, King or Congress." He was scalped in the afternoon by a friendly Indian named Yan, (a son of David, who was killed by the cav-

alry under Col. Harper, in 1777,) and on the following morning he was summoned to the bar of his Maker, to render an account "for the deeds done in the body." The victims of Crysler's invasion at Foxes creek, were buried in rough boxes with their clothes on.—*Jacob and Wm. Becker, who escaped by flight; Judge Becker and Jacob Zimmer, jr., two of the boys who discovered the enemy near the house; and the manuscript of Judge Hager.*

John Snyder, known after the war as "Schoharie John," and Peter Mann, of Foxes creek, were captured in the morning by Crysler and party, as the former were returning from Beaver-dam; Mann was however liberated in Kneiskern's dorf. The enemy proceeded from the estuary of Cobelskill and the Schoharie, up the former stream.

On the following day in the present town of Cobelskill, George Warner, jun., who was engaged in shifting horses from one field to another, was captured by Crysler and his destructives, who directed their course from thence to the Susquehanna. Warner instantly recognized as one of the master spirits among his captors, the Schoharie chief *Seth's Henry*, who still carried upon his arm the indellible evidence of Sawyer's '*strike for liberty*,' when a captive in his hands. The second day after leaving Cobelskill, the whole party were obliged to subsist on horse flesh without bread or seasoning of any kind. Warner, who communicated these facts to the author, said he ate on the way to Niagara, of a deer, a wolf, a rattlesnake, and a hen-hawk, but without bread or salt. The two captives, Zimmer and Warner, were lightly bound, and generally fared alike while on their journey. They had for some days contemplated making their escape, and complaining that they could not travel on account of their cords, they were a little loosened, which favored their plan. They concluded they ought, in justice, to communicate their intention to their fellow prisoner, although he was not bound, and give him a chance to escape with them, if he chose to embrace it. But a short time after their intention was communicated to a third person, the conspirators for liberty were more firmly bound than ever, and were afterwards continually watched until they arrived at Niagara.

Nights they were pinioned so tight that they could not get their hands together ; and were secured by a rope tied to a tree or pole, upon which rope an Indian always laid down.

On their way, the party passed several rattle-snakes, which the Indians avoided disturbing ; and at *the narrows* on the Chemung, which was barely wide enough for a road, they, with no little difficulty, made a circuit to pass one. The New York Indians had a superstitious notion, that to harm a rattle-snake was ominous of evil, and they never did it, unless to use the reptile for medicinal purposes, or prevent starvation. While on their journey, Snyder, from some cause, had angry words with one of the savages, and the latter several times twirled a tomahawk over his head, and drew a scalping knife round the crown threateningly : but they made up friends and renewed their march. The Schoharie prisoners also passed on their way, another party of Indians, who were killing a prisoner in a singular manner. His captors had tied his wrists together and drawn them over his knees, after which a stick was passed under the knees and over the wrists, and a rope tied to it between them, and thrown over the limb of a tree. His tormenters then drew him up a distance and let him fall by slacking the rope ; continuing their hellish sport until the concussion extinguished the vital spark.

Soon after the party passed the outlet of Seneca lake, Captain Crysler told the prisoners, tauntingly, how soon the *King would conquer the rebels*. Warner listened with impatience for a time, and being unable to restrain his feelings, replied, "I do not believe the King will ever conquer the colonies : in the French war Great Britain and America united were hardly able to compete with France ; and now, since France and America are united, I do not believe it possible for England to conquer them." This conversation took place in the evening, and Warner observed, while speaking, that a frown rested upon the brows of the dusky warriors and their lawless captain. Warner soon after heard the tory give orders in the Indian tongue, which he understood, to have his bands tightened. In the morning, he expostulated with Crysler for so doing ; who was very angry and declared, that

*“for those cursed words he should hang at noon.”* Accordingly a noose was made in a rope, and the rest of it coiled and placed around his neck, which he was compelled to wear. As may be supposed, he traveled the forest with a heavy heart: still he looked upon the gallows with no little indifference, as it would end his bodily torments, and relieve him from the treatment of an unfeeling royalist. About 10 o'clock, A. M., the party halted, as Warner supposed, to anticipate the time of his execution; but, contrary to his expectation, the rope was taken off without any explanation.

Warner and Zimmer, on arriving at the Indian villages in western New York, were subjected to the cruelties their customs inflicted on captives. The first treatment of the kind they received was from a gad in the hands of Molly Brant, (former housekeeper of Sir William Johnson,) who embraced every opportunity during the war to insult and injure captive Americans. Soon after Molly had vented her spleen upon the two bound captives, they arrived at an Indian castle, where they had to run the gantlet. When the lines were formed, an Indian chief called Abraham, who recognized Warner, stepped up to him and asked him, in German, where he was from. He replied, Schoharie. “Do you know George Warner of Cobelskill?” continued the Indian. “He is my father,” replied young Warner. This Indian, as Warner afterwards learned, had often partaken of his father’s hospitality before the war. Said the Indian, “When you start to run, the boys will get before you, but you must run over them or push them one side; they will not hurt you any the more for it, and when you get through, run to a wigwam and you will not again be hurt.” Their fellow prisoner was not compelled to run, and as it happened, Zimmer started first. As the Indian had anticipated, the boys ran before him and he was receiving a severe castigation, when Warner, forcing his way past him, ran down several of the living obstacles, and was near the end of the lines almost untouched: where stood a large boy, who, as he bounded along, dealt him a blow upon the back of his head, which felled him senseless to the ground. Zimmer, who had not heard the

conversation between Warner and the Indian, and feared to harm the boys, followed his companion closely in the path he had opened, and arrived at the goal of delivery, without having sustained any serious injury.

On arriving within half a mile of Niagara, Peter Ball, who had removed at the beginning of the war to Canada, from the vicinity of Schoharie, saw and recognized Warner, and led him away from the squaws and young Indians, who were besetting him at every step with some missile. Zimmer saw on the journey, his brother's scalp, with those of the other similar trophies of Crysler's invasion, stretched upon hoops to dry; and on arriving at Niagara, saw them deposited, with *bushels* of similar *British merchandize*, made up of *the crown scalps of both sexes and all ages*. There were about two hundred prisoners confined at Niagara when Warner and Zimmer were there, many of whom fared hard, and several of whom died for want of food and proper treatment. Among the prisoners confined at Niagara there were nearly one hundred Virginia riflemen, some of whom, to say the least, feared nothing in this world.

Warner, for a considerable time during his captivity, worked for a man living near Niagara, as did also Christian Price, a spirited Virginian. In the latter part of the war, several Indians were found dead at different times, early in the morning, but the author of those *midnight mysteries*, although the prisoners were often accused of them, were never discovered, notwithstanding numbers were sometimes in the secret. Among the victims who were thus sacrificed in revenge of the cruelties and indignities meted to the American prisoners, was a young Indian, sixteen or seventeen years old, known about the fort as *William Johnson*. He was a half-breed, said to have been a son of Sir Wm. Johnson, after whom he was called, by a squaw. This namesake of the Baronet, who was *one* among *numerous* evidences of his *rakish* propensity, was one morning discovered in a barrel of rain water, under the conductor of a house, into which he had *unaccountably* fallen head first and drowned. Several prisoners were suspected of being accessory to the death of this Indian, but *free*



*masonry* was then at its zenith. The tories on one occasion gave a stump to the prisoners to wrestle. Price, who was a muscular, athletic fellow, accepted the challenge and walked into the ring to wrestle with the acknowledged bully. The prisoner, with ease, threw the braggadocio in a very *feeling* manner, and the sport was soon ended. Warner was retained a prisoner until after peace was proclaimed, and with twenty-three others ran away from Niagara one Sunday night. They halted at Oswego, purchased provisions of the British soldiers, and made the best of their way home through the forest. Zimmer returned home a short time before Warner, on parole. Snyder, on arriving in Canada, enlisted into the British service, as his friends have stated, to afford him an opportunity to desert and return home.

If the American prisoners at Niagara usually fared hard, they occasionally had an hour of merriment, as the following anecdote will show.

*A Tory Wedding.*—Among the tories who removed from Schoharie county to Niagara, in the beginning of the war, was a man named Cockle, who had a pretty daughter called Peggy. On a certain occasion an Irishman named Patrick Tuffts, who worked much in Col. Butler's garden, and who was a dissipated, simple fellow, was made the butt of no little pleasantry. The farce was set on foot by a British officer, and the matter principally conducted by him. Tuffts was induced to make love to the charming Peggy, who, agreeably to previous arrangements, reciprocated the sentiment, and at an appointed time, agreed to marry him. Christian Price, the Virginian previously mentioned, who in features somewhat resembled the fair *toryess*, was in the secret, and on the evening appointed, changed dresses with her, so that, to use the words of a guest, "Peggy was Price and Price was Peggy." At the hour appointed, the guests, who were numerous, for many of the prisoners were invited, assembled at the house of an influential tory. Stephen Secutt, a sergeant, a shrewd fellow, acted the ministerial part. The couple stood up before Secutt, who, with no little sang-froid, performed the marriage ceremony; at the close of which he received from the happy son

of Erin a *silver dollar*—a rarity in those days—to compensate for his official services.

Ample provision had been made by the officers and soldiers, and when the knot was pronounced tied, wine sparkled in many a cup. After the party had been drinking for some time, and the groom and bride had received many happy salutations, the tones of a violin greeted the ear, and the party prepared for a dance. The bride, who had been sitting a while in the lap of Tuffts, who was at least “half seas over,” arose to dance with a guest as partner—the groom never having visited France, unless it were to—“*lend us your grid-iron.*” In the midst of the dance Mistress Tuffts allowed her partner certain liberties, which the groom, being told by a guest was very improper, arose to resent. Bounding into the figure with a rash oath, he changed it into a reel by knocking down his wife. Mistress Tuffts sprang from the floor and ran out of the room to doff the petticoat and gown; and soon after returned as Christian Price, to bathe a black eye with a glass of wine. Tuffts, poor fellow, was soon to be seen staggering amid the delighted company, inquiring for his wife. At length he inquired of Warner if he had seen her. “You have no wife,” was the answer. “Yes I have—eh,” said Tuffts; “I am lawfully married—eh. Did I not pay a silver dollar to be married—eh?” “Yes, you are married,” said Warner, “to *Christian Price.*” This was a poser, and he could not at first credit the story of his deception; but after being ridiculed by the whole party, and jeered until nearly sober, he withdrew from the scene of merriment made at his expense, to mourn over the result of his precipitate marriage, which had wedded him to a man, and taken from him his only dollar. Had he ever seen the Latin line so often quoted, he would no doubt have exclaimed, on counting over his beads and retiring to rest—*O Tempora! O Mores!!—George Warner.*

About the 1st of September, 1781, a party of twenty or thirty of the enemy, mostly Indians, by whom led I have not been able to learn, entered the lower part of the Cobelskill settlement, which took in that part of the town now known as Cobelskill village,

or *The Churches*. The enemy, on entering the settlement, surprised and killed George Frimire, and captured his brother, John Frimire, with George Fester, Abraham Bouck, a boy, John Nicholas, and Nicholas, Peter, and William Utman, brothers. After plundering and burning the dwellings and out-buildings which had eesaped the enemy's visitation four years previous, they passed in the afternoon near the fort, then feebly garrisoned. As there was but little ammunition in the fort, few shots were fired upon the enemy, who did not incline to attack it. The dwelling of Jacob Shafer was picketed in, and a little distance outside the inclosure stood two large barns owned by him. Two Indians, with fire-brands, approached these barns, whereupon Shafer, declaring "*My property is as dear as my life!*" with gun in hand, left the fort, followed by Christopher King, a young man of spirit. As they advanced towards the *barn-burners* they gave a savage war-whoop, drew up their guns, and fired; and the Indians, abandoning their design, showed their heels in rapid flight. That night the enemy stayed at the house of one Borst, which they burned in the morning, and soon after again passed near the fort, upon which several of them then fired, without, however, doing any injury. The enemy then disappeared, probably pursuing the usual southwestern route to Niagara. The treatment those prisoners received has not come to the knowledge of the writer, but it was undoubtedly of that character usually experienced by captives among the Indians—suffering from exposure, possibly torture, hunger, and the gantlet.—*Capt. George Warner, (this old hero died April 4, 1844, aged 86½ years,) and Mrs. Elizabeth, wife of Tunis Vrooman, before named, who was in the Cobelskill fort when invaded.*

The reader will remember that when Brant desolated the upper part of Cobelskill in 1778, the log house of the elder George Warner was spared from conflagration, as was then supposed, to afford an opportunity to capture a committee man. Feeling too poor to erect a frame dwelling upon the ashes of his former one, he took up his winter residence in his old log dwelling. Seth's Henry, and six other Indians, who had traversed the forest from

Niagara to Cobelskill, at that inclement season, (a distance, by their route, of at least three hundred miles,) for the sole purpose of capturing Warner, who was known to be an influential whig, arrived in the vicinity of his dwelling on Sunday, the 11th day of December, 1782. On the same day Nicholas Warner, his oldest son, went from one of the Schoharie forts to the paternal dwelling in a sleigh, accompanied by Joseph Barner, to get a lumber-sleigh owned by the former, for the winter's use of which the latter had agreed to pay him one dollar—a dollar being as valuable in the then impoverished state of the country as half a dozen would be at the present day. When Warner and Barner were fastening one sled to the other, one of their horses broke loose and ran into the woods, and while they were recovering the animal the enemy arrived. On surprising old Mr. Warner, one or two shots were fired to intimidate him, which, as it snowed very fast, were unheard by his son and companion. Catching the stray horse, they returned and fastened the team to the sleds. As they drove past the house they discovered the Indians, three of whom attempted to take them. In making a little circuit to avoid the enemy, the horses were driven partly into the top of a fallen tree, when the friends attempted to cut loose the back sleigh. At this time two of the Indians fired upon them, the third reserving his fire. The horses ran partly over a log concealed in the snow, and the hindmost sleigh, not running true, struck a sapling and drew the box off, and Warner under it. Barner, having the reins, was drawn over the box, and remained upon the sleigh bottom. When Warner regained his feet, he observed that the Indian who had reserved his fire, had advanced to within some twenty paces of him, with a steady aim upon his person,—and conscious of the danger he must encounter to regain the sleigh, he abandoned the attempt, and told his comrade, still holding his restive steeds, to secure his own flight if he could, and leave him to his fate. He then drove off, and Warner became a prisoner. Soon after, one of the Indians, who knew him, enquired *if he could shoot as good as he once could?* His reply was, *"I can, on a proper occasion."*

Mrs. Warner and a daughter who chanced to be at home, were left unharmed. After plundering the house of such articles as they desired, and securing a quantity of meat and flour to afford them subsistence for several days, the Indians, with their prisoners, some time in the afternoon, set off up the creek, pursuing the most direct route to the Susquehanna. The snow was then nearly knee deep, and receiving copious accessions: the party, therefore, could not travel very rapidly. They proceeded about six miles and encamped, when they boiled a portion of their meat in a stolen teakettle—sad perversion of its use, as the tidy housewife will say—for their supper. When cooked, an Indian cut it as nearly as possible into *nine* equal parts; then a second Indian turned his back, and a third gave owners to each mess; as fishermen and hunters often do, by “touching it off:” which is done by pointing at a portion, unobserved by another individual, with the familiar demand, *who shall have that?*—whose reply gives it a lawful owner.

When captured, the younger Warner had on “Dutch shoes”—brogans. Observing that, the Indian who claimed him as prisoner (who could speak Low Dutch, which he partially understood,) asked him if he would trade a pair of mocasons with him for his shoes—taking them off, and making known by signs what he could not fully communicate in Dutch. Said he to the Indian, “I am your prisoner, and if I freeze my feet and cannot keep up with you, you will kill me: I now look to you for protection as to a father, and will try to love you as such.” The Indian comprehended enough of what his prisoner had said to arrive at his meaning, and made the exchange. Warner then put on the mocasons, which were made with leggins, and buttoned his breeches over them; when the Indians, to use his own words, “*Looked wild at one another.*” He thought they exchanged very significant looks, and fearing they suspected his intention, already conceived, of making his escape, he moved about a little and rubbed his legs, as if the better to adjust his new *disguise*, and then seated himself before the fire, with his hands clenched across his knees. Instead of *allaying*, his last movement had a tendency to *increase* the sus-



picion and vigilance of his dusky captors; observing which, he took off the mocasons, folded them up with care and put them into the bosom of his shirt; which lulled all suspicion. Said Warner, at our interview in 1837, "To relate what took place on the night I was a prisoner with the Indians, now makes the cold chills run over me." The party laid down early to sleep, but the younger Warner, intent upon escaping, did not close his eyes; and about midnight, thinking all were slumbering, he arose and ran off—directing his footsteps homeward. He had hardly started, as his father afterwards informed him, when his escape was discovered, and *four* of the enemy were in pursuit; but as it was still snowing fast, and dark as the rotunda of Gebhard's cavern, they could not catch a glimpse of, much less follow him. He took a circuitous route in his flight, conjecturing that if pursued it would be on the back track, which was in fact the case. The Indians ran but a short distance and abandoned pursuit, fearing they might be troubled to retrace their steps to their own camp. Warner ran several miles with one hand before him, to prevent striking the trees. He crossed the creek *six* times in his flight, which he was as often conscious of, and arrived at Fort Duboise, *nine* miles from his captor's encampment, just at daylight. There was an old body of snow on the ground which was stiff, and the falling snow being damp readily packed upon it, otherwise he must have worn out his stockings and frozen his feet.

The elder Warner did not attempt to escape, but was watched with vigilance night and day. He must have suffered much from cold, but little from hunger; as one of the party was an expert hunter, and usually supplied plenty of food of some kind. Nimrod was however ill a few days and the party did not fare as well; but when others brought in game, he usually took good care to fill his meat basket, and soon recovered. An Englishman prefers going into battle upon a full stomach, and an Indian being sick upon the same allowance. It was considered an honorable affair to capture an influential whig, besides entitling to a very liberal reward; and as Warner was one of the most noted in the Schoharie settlements, his captors were anxious to deliver him in

Canada, and he was treated with greater forbearance and kindness on his way, than was any other captive who went from the Schoharie settlements during the war. The flour taken from Warner's was boiled in the teakettle, and usually eaten by the Indians, who gave the prisoner meat; reversing the usual treatment of captives in their anxiety to deliver him safely in Canada. After the escape of his son, five of the Indians usually kept watch over Warner in the early part of the night and two in the latter part. One of the Indians treated the captive committee man with the kindness of a brother all the way to Niagara. On arriving at the Indian settlements in western New York, this Indian took him by the hand and led him unhurt outside the lines which had been formed for his reception, to the displeasure of those, who had from infancy been taught to delight in tortures and cruelty. A prisoner being led by his captor outside the gantlet lines, was an evidence of protection and exemption from abuse seldom ever violated.

While Mr. Warner was a captive he frequently sung a hymn in German. The young Indians almost invariably would begin to mock him, but if the name of the Deity was introduced, they usually understood it, and if so it never failed to produce their silence; such reverence had those unlettered sons of the forest for the Great Spirit of the Universe. Indeed, the Indians of the Six Nations had no words in their dialect by which they could profane the name of Jehovah, and if they did so, it was in the language of their white neighbors.\* Soon after his arrival in Canada, Mr. Warner was sent to Rebel Island near Montreal, where he was given parole liberty.

After an absence of about *eleven months*, Mr. Warner was exchanged, and *being sworn to secrecy*, returned home by the north eastern route, coming through Hartford, Conn.; and what was unusual, was better clad on his return than at the time of his capture. Had all the captive Americans been treated with the kindness and forbearance of George Warner, sen., the *horrors of our*

\* A fact communicated by Joseph Brant, to a friend of the author.

border wars had been greatly mitigated, and the suffering, which in the aggregate was most astounding, rendered comparatively trifling.\*

Gen. Washington, while at Albany in the summer of 1782, was invited by the citizens to visit Schenectada.† He accepted the invitation, and in company with Gen. Schuyler, rode there in a carriage from Albany on the 30th of June; where he was received with no little formality by the civil and military authorities, and escorted some distance by a numerous procession, in which he walked with his hat under his arm. Abraham Clinch, who came to America as drum-major under Gen. Braddock, then kept a tavern in Schenectada, and at his house a public dinner was given. Having previously heard of his sufferings, one of the first persons Washington enquired after, was Col. Frederick Fisher, who was then residing in the place. He expressed surprise that the colonel had not been invited to meet him, and agreeable to his request a messenger was sent for him. He was a man of real merit, but modest and retiring in his habits. On this occasion, he was found

\* The particulars of the capture of the two Warners, were obtained from *Nicholas Warner* in the fall of 1837: at that time he had a cancer on his mouth, which terminated his existence on the 27th day of July, 1838. He was 91 years old on the 31st day of October preceding his death.

† This ancient town, at a time when England and France were at war, was invaded by 250 French and Indian warriors, who made the journey from Canada in the depth of winter expressly to destroy it. The village, then numbering about 40 good dwellings, was inclosed by pallisades, and approached by two gates. As the visit of an enemy was not anticipated at that inclement season, the gates were both left open, and had been for some weeks. On Saturday night, Feb. 8 1690, the invaders entered the town by the western gate, and separating into small parties, began an indiscriminate slaughter of the inhabitants. Many of the male citizens were killed in the onset; but of those persons who escaped at the eastern gate, some 20 arrived in Albany, more or less frost-bitten, having fled nearly naked in the snow, a distance of sixteen miles, while others perished by the way. Sixty persons, mostly women and children, were carried into captivity, the town all plundered and burnt, except two dwellings. The commanders ordered the casks of liquor found in the place all stove, to prevent the men from getting drunk. A party of cavalry from Albany, joined by a band of brave Mohawks, were soon on their trail, and overtaking them in a favorable place, fell upon their rear and slew 25 of them. The remainder, after much suffering, arrived in Canada with their scalps and plunder.

at work in his barn, which, under the circumstances, he left with reluctance, but was kindly greeted by the illustrious guest, who paid him marked attention.

At the dinner table were assembled a respectable number of gentlemen, among whom were Gen. Schuyler, Colonels Ab'm Wemple and Fr. Fisher; Majors Ab'm Switz, Myndert Wemple, and Jelles Fonda; Captains Peter Truax and John Mynderson; Henry Glen, Dep. Com. Gen., and Isaac Truax, then the oldest man in the place. Washington assigned the seat next his own to Col. Fisher.—*Isaac De Graff and John J. Schermerhorn.*

This was indeed a proud day for "Old Dorp."\* Some person publicly addressed the visitor on the occasion, and before returning to Albany, he wrote the following reply:

*"To the Magistrates and Military Officers of the town of Schenectady:*

"Gentlemen:—I request you to accept my warmest thanks for your affectionate address.

"In a cause so just and righteous as ours, we have every reason to hope the Divine Providence will still continue to crown our arms with success, and finally compel our enemies to grant us that peace upon equitable terms, which we so ardently desire.

"May you, and the good people of this town, in the mean time, be protected from every insidious and open foe, and may the complicated blessings of peace soon reward your arduous struggles for the establishment of the freedom and independence of our common country.

"GO. WASHINGTON.

*"Schenectady, June 30th, 1782."*

The following anecdote originated at Schenectada during the visit of Gen. Washington. He was walking a public street in company with Brower Banker, a respectable citizen, and blacksmith by trade, when an old negro passing took off his hat and bowed to him: the great commander immediately returned the compliment. Banker expressed surprise that his companion thus noticed this descendant of Ishmael, observing it was not the custom of the country thus to notice slaves. *"I cannot be less civil*

\*This is the Dutch word for *town*, and when used within a hundred miles of the place is understood to mean Schenectada: the latter is an Indian word, said to signify *Over-the-pines*. Albany and Schenectada were early distinguished by the Dutch words *stadt*, for city, and *dorp*, for town.

*than a poor negro,"* was his manly reply, as they proceeded onward.—*Rynier Gardinier.*

Some of the necessities of life rose excessively high during the Revolution, besides being extremely difficult to obtain. Individuals went from the westward of Albany to Boston to procure salt. In a letter written by Cornelius Cuyler, of Albany, to Robert Snell, Esq., of Tryon county, dated, "Albany, March 5, 1779," I find the following sentence: "Could you not get wheat from the farmers in exchange for salt, to be delivered at Schenectada on your order? If so, let the farmers deliver the wheat at your mills, and give them a certificate on my brother, John Cuyler, for the quantity they may deliver, and they shall receive salt in proportion of *six skipples of wheat for one of salt.* Cheese was sold from *seventeen to twenty cents* per pound, and *nails* used in the Highlands, *fifty cents* per pound.

Some time in the Revolution, Timothy Murphy had charge of a small scout which went to reconnoitre in the vicinity of Oquago. While there they took three prisoners, one of whom was a Scotch lad of suspicious character, and soon after started on their return to Schoharie. In the night, the boy escaped, taking along Murphy's rifle—an act not very pleasing to the fearless ranger. Some month's after, the boy was retaken by another scout, and with him the stolen fire-lock. When Murphy learned that the boy was taken, and was approaching as a prisoner, his worst passions were aroused, and he declared his intention to kill him, and armed himself with a tomahawk for that purpose. Elerson, and one or two of his companions in arms, reasoned the matter with him. They told him to imagine himself in the boy's situation, and asked him if *he*, similarly situated, would have acted differently from what the boy had? His anger was in a measure appeased; resentment yielded to the force of sober reasoning; and the boy was brought into his presence without receiving any injury. He was afterwards taken to Albany, and sold for the time being. Murphy, speaking of this affair, after the war, expressed his gratitude that he was prevented by his friends from injuring the lad who had stolen his gun.—*Elerson, Nich. Warner, Jacob Becker, and Mrs. Van Slyck.*



A tory, named Jacob Salisbury, was concealed in a house in the present town of Bern, Albany county, in the latter part of the war, for several months. A hole had been cut in the floor, and covered with a trap door, and in a small space dug beneath the floor, the tory concealed himself whenever any of his neighbors, not in the secret of his *burrow*, were at the house. His object, it is believed, was to act the *spy*, but having been discovered, he was arrested and imprisoned.—*Mrs. Eleanor Feeck.*

There is a tradition in Schoharie, currently believed by some, that an attempt was made in the latter part of the Revolution, to capture Timothy Murphy by *stratagem*. It is said that the hero had a cow, on the neck of which he placed a bell, the better to enable him to find her; and that an Indian, to gain an interview, took the bell from the cow's neck and placed it upon his own, when he gingled it about in the woods, where the cow sometimes ran, to afford him and his companions an opportunity either to kill or capture its owner. Murphy knew too well whether a cow or an Indian rattled his bell, and driving her home from another part of the woods, he left the ding-dong warrior to make music for his fellows.—*Mrs. Angelica Vrooman.*

Timothy Murphy, the brave soldier with whom we must soon part company, (whose daring spirit the reader has no doubt been pleased with,) was never wounded in battle, and, I believe, never a prisoner with the enemy. It was his misfortune, like that of many other master spirits of the Revolution, not to have had the advantages of an early education, even such as our common schools now afford. In fact, he possessed not the elements of an education: the art of reading and writing. For this reason, he declined accepting a proffered commission; knowing that he would be subjected to much inconvenience, and be liable to be imposed upon by designing men. Had he been an educated man, he might have made another Wayne or Morgan: but the want of the rudiments of an education compelled him to see others less fitted in other respects than himself, occupying stations of profit and honor. At the close of the war, he became a cultivator of the soil on the farm of his father-in-law, on which his ashes now

repose. He was a citizen much respected in the county. As a father, he was generous and indulgent to a fault, having been known to bring home, from Albany, for a daughter, some five or six dresses at one time.

Although Murphy could neither read nor write, yet, when mounted upon a stump or some eminence, he could harrangue a public audience with great effect, and for many years exerted a powerful influence in the political ranks of Schoharie county. He was very active in bringing his young friend and neighbor, the Hon. Wm. C. Bouck, from retirement into public notice—was zealous in obtaining for him the appointment of sheriff—and indirectly contributed not a little to his subsequent distinction.

On the 15th day of March, 1784, the ice lodged in the river near Middleburgh, overflowed the flats in the neighborhood of Murphy's residence, where they seldom if ever before had been similarly inundated. Many cattle and sheep were swept off in the freshet and perished. In an attempt to save the family of John Adam Brown, a near neighbor, Murphy waded into the water amidst the ice, and succeeded in bearing to a place of safety his two sons ; but Brown, and Lana, his only daughter, then about 12 years old, were unfortunately in the lower part of the house and were drowned. Murphy lost his wife (by whom he had nine children) in 1807 ; and married Mary Robertson five or six years after, by whom he also had several children. He died of a cancer upon his throat June 27th, 1818 ; the foundation of which disease was supposed to have been laid, while attempting to rescue Brown and his family in 1784. The Rev. John Schermerhorn preached the funeral sermon of Murphy and that of two other individuals, George Mattice and a colored woman, on the same day.

The following are the inscriptions upon the tomb-stones of Murphy and his first wife :

“ Timothy Murphy died June 27, 1818 ; aged 67 years.

“ Here too, this warrior sire, with honor rests,  
Who bared in freedom's cause his valiant breast  
Sprang from his half drawn furrow, as the cry  
Of threatened liberty came thrilling by ;  
Look'd to his God, and reared in bulwark round

Breast free from guile, and hands with toil embrown'd,  
And bade a monarch's thousand banners yield—  
Firm at the plough, and glorious in the field,  
Lo! here he rests, who every danger braved,  
Marked and honored, amid the soil he saved."

"Margaret, wife of Timothy Murphy, died Sept. 1, 1807,  
aged 44 years."

Some time in the latter part of the war, possibly when the enemy were in its vicinity, an incident occurred at Fort Duboise, in Cobelskill, which, in its result, was a source of merriment. John King was one night in a sentry box, keeping vigils for the safety of himself and others, when he discovered some object slowly approaching the place where he was stationed. It was light enough for him to obtain a sight of the object, but not with sufficient distinctness to identify its character; and supposing it to be a tory or an Indian visitant, he hailed it with the accustomed "Who comes there?" demanding also the *countersign*. To the interrogatories of the sentinel no reply was given, but the supposed foe continued to advance; and King, already imagining he saw the uplifted tomahawk of a gigantic Indian, leveled his trusty gun and fired. The report echoed upon the midnight air until lost in gentle murmurs among the distant hills, and greatly alarmed the little garrison and several families of citizens, clustered in rude huts within the picketed inclosure for safety. The courageous were quickly armed for an expected onset of a desperate foe. King pointed out, in the uncertain light, to the swollen eyes of his officer and comrades the supposed enemy, evidently weltering in his blood, for his temerity in presuming to approach a post, guarded by so trusty a sentinel. The object soon became still, and the silence of midnight was again restored. The inmates of the fort retired to rest—probably, few to sleep again that night; but all to pray for the return of daylight. That light at length came, and disclosed to the inmates of the fort, whose curiosity was on tiptoe, that the vigilant watchman *had actually killed a large—"bull calf."* The heedless animal, ignorant of the police of a camp, had strayed from a neighboring field, and was slowly grazing toward the wary guard, when he received a bullet which killed him outright.—*Marcus Brown.*

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Sleep on ! *fearless ranger* ; the Indian no more  
 Shall dye his coarse blanket in citizen's gore :  
 He has left, aye, *forever*, the vales where you fought,  
 And his hosts of brave warriors have dwindled to nought.  
     The vigils you kept in the partizan strife,  
     Protecting the weak from the merciless knife  
     Of mocason'd foes, who at midnight came near,  
     We'll ever remember in green leaf and sear—  
 And with tears dew the roses that bloom o'er the graves,  
 Of the heroes who saved us—the *pioneer braves*.

The active operations of the enemy closed with the year 1782, preliminaries for a peace having been agreed upon in November of that year, which was finally ratified on the 30th day of the following September. On the 25th of November, 1783, the British troops evacuated New York, and the Americans, under General Washington, entered the city the same day, where they were welcomed by the friends of the Republic with many demonstrations of joy. Washington repaired to Annapolis, Md., where Congress was then in session, and on the 20th day of December he resigned to that august body his military command, prefaced by a brief and appropriate address, which was handsomely responded to by its president, Gen. Mifflin. Once more a private citizen, the great Washington repaired to his seat at Mount Vernon, followed by the prayers and admiration of every lover of *civil liberty* upon the habitable globe.

Othout Van Rensselaer, Esq., of Albany, is said to have been commissioner for disposing of confiscated property in the Schoharie settlements. The title of farms (in New York) in the possession of royalists, which had been purchased of patriotic Ameri-

cans, *and not paid for*, reverted to the private owner,—while those of active royalists, who held a free title, were confiscated to the government. Nearly all the property sequestered in the present county of Schoharie, was owned in Brakabeen, Rhinebeck, and New Dorlach, more than one thousand acres of which were in the latter settlement.

After the war not a few tories came back to Schoharie, some of whom even boasted of their evil deeds, and if they were not treated like Beacraft, they were looked upon with great suspicion for at least one generation.

A number of Schoharie Indians, who had escaped the bullets of the rangers, claiming the same privilege as the tories with whom they had acted, also returned to the scenes of their former cruelties. Among them was Seth's Henry, as previously mentioned, Abram, his sister's son, and a few others of notoriety. The former had not been long in Vrooman's Land before he became suspicious of the republicans, and whenever he entered a house he preferred a position where he could look from an open door or window, and anticipate any ominous movement. From this place he started to go to the Charlotte river, was followed by Timothy Murphy, who had kept vigils of his footsteps in the valley, and, as he never reached the place for which he set out, it was currently believed, though not generally known, that his bones were left to bleach in the intervening forest. The writer has no doubt from the information he has received from *Lawrence Mattice, David Elerson, and others*, that a bullet from the rifle which sent Gen. Fraser to his long home, also ended the career of this crafty chief, who was one of the most blood-thirsty and successful warriors of the Revolution.

The Schoharie Indian, Abram, who returned with Seth's Henry, was followed by Peter C. Vrooman, (familiarily known as *Hazel Pete*,) armed with an axe, into the kitchen of Samuel Vrooman's house, in Vrooman's Land, where he inflicted two blows upon his head, and would no doubt have slain him as he lay upon the floor, had not a slave belonging to the house seized the arm of the assailant, and afforded the Indian an opportunity to effect



his escape. The Indian had provoked Vrooman's vengeance by boasting of his former deeds, and would no doubt have been killed by the first blow struck at him, had not the missile hit the floor over head, and broken its fall. He was a long time in recovering, and is said to have been less saucy afterwards.—*Mrs. Van Slyck and J. W. Bouck.*

This same Indian, if report is true, tarried about Schoharie for a year or two, and suddenly disappeared. He was at a *bee*, as a gathering of neighbors is called, when they are assembled to *husk corn, draw wood, or manure, &c.*, as is often witnessed in the interior of New York,—the sequel of which usually is, a good warm supper, got up in the best possible style,—on some occasions followed by a dance. Such *bees* are common in the Schoharie and Mohawk valleys now, and have been from the time of their earliest white settlements. Indeed, they are not confined to the *males* either: *quilting bees, spinning bees, apple-paring bees*, and the like, are common among the females, and fortunate, indeed, is that young man's lot who has notice to be present and help "shake the quilt," or remove the rejected parts of the apple, as he sometimes has most delectable kissing when the quilt is *folded*, the apples *cut*, and the happifying "come Phylanders," and many other *nectar* originators are fairly begun.—Pardon this digression, kind reader: I was going to say that the Indian Abram was at a *bee* of some sort at the house of a farmer on Foxes creek, and was not a little intoxicated. "Schoharie John" was there also, and probably not sober enough to "walk a crack," unless it were a curved one. They quarreled; after passionate words had escaped them, the Indian left the house, and was followed in a short time by "Schoharie John." This Indian was never seen again in the settlement, and as a large pile of drift-wood upon the bank of the creek not far distant, was seen on fire the following morning, it was conjectured by some, that *possibly* Abram's bones might be found in the ashes; but whether they were or not, or whether suspicion slandered the old soldier who followed him from the house, the writer knows not.—*Doct. P. S. Swart, J. M. Swart, and others.*

Most of the Indians who returned to Schoharie after the war, remained about the settlement until fall, when several of their number disappeared in a very unaccountable manner. The fact was, several of them had been met in by places by citizen hunters, and were possibly mistaken for *bears*. A few disappeared, and the rest took the hint and left the country.—*Lawrence Lawyer*.

The most common beverages drank by the soldiery in the Revolution, were *flip* and *kill-devil*. The former was made of beer brewed from malt and hops, to which was added sugar and liquor—the whole heated with a hot iron. The latter was made like *flip*, except that cider was substituted for beer. The price of each was one shilling for a quart mug: half a mug usually served two persons.

Among the survivors of the Revolution, with whom the author has spent many agreeable hours, is Capt. Eben Williams, a son of Jonathan Williams, of Lebanon, Connecticut. He entered the army under Col. Patterson, of Berkshire county, Massachusetts, in 1775, from which time to the end of the war, he was in constant and varied service. He was on duty in *eleven* of the thirteen states and the Canadas. He witnessed the battle of Bunker Hill, but was with the troops at their camp on the main land, where an attack was expected. He also witnessed the surrender of the armies of Burgoyne and Cornwallis.

On the 20th day of May, 1776, he was in the battle of *The Cedars*, thirty-nine miles from Montreal, on which occasion he became a prisoner to the Indians, by whom he was robbed of his clothing. He was kept in confinement ten days, and then exchanged. He was commissioned as second lieutenant of infantry, in September, 1776. In February, 1777, Col. Patterson was promoted to brigadier-general, and Joseph Vose became the colonel of his regiment, which formed a part of the army of Gen. Gates in the fall campaign of that year. Col. Vose, who made a prudent, good officer, had been educated a butcher. While marching at the head of his regiment, in the vicinity of Burgoyne's army, to execute a command, a party of Hessians brought two field-pieces

to bear upon them, and a shot striking the Colonel's horse killed it under him, but without halting his men he proceeded on foot, ordering a drummer to bring along his pistols.\*

In the fall of 1777, the brigade of Gen. Glover, to which Williams, then a lieutenant of infantry, was attached, proceeded from Bemis's Heights to Valley Forge for winter quarters. On arriving near the residence of Gen. Richard Montgomery's widow, the brigade halted for the night. Mrs. Montgomery was then pleasantly situated near the Hudson, about midway between Red Hook and Rhinebeck. Col. Shephard, at that time in temporary command of the troops, as a compliment to the widow of so conspicuous a martyr in the cause, dispatched Lieut. Williams, in the capacity of adjutant, with a major-general's guard, and the compliments of the commander, tendering the service of the guard for the night. A major-general's guard consisted of a subaltern officer and *twenty* men; and a brigadier-general's guard, of a sergeant and *twelve* men. As Williams rode up to the door, Mrs. Montgomery (a Livingston before marriage) made her appearance. She possessed a genteel form, with a small sparkling eye, and was neatly clad in black. She performed her part of the ceremony very politely, accepting the guard, and quartering them for the night. The officer of the guard was a gallant young ensign under Capt. Pillsbury, who was highly pleased with the duty and executed it handsomely. He was enthusiastic, on joining his regiment in the morning, in describing the very hospitable manner in which himself and men were entertained.

In the summer of 1778, Lieut. Williams was on duty in New Jersey, and was at the battle of Monmouth. In August following that battle, Gen. Glover's brigade, consisting of four Massa-

\*The *sang froid* manifested by Col. Vose, while under Gen. Gates, reminds me of another anecdote of the same campaign. Col. Scammel was distinguished for his courage and activity in the battle of Saratoga, and in the heat of it his *cue* was nearly shot off by a ball from the enemy. Pulling it off, he threw it down in the direction of the foe, exclaiming with emphasis—"D—n you, take it all!" Col. S. led the van of Washington's army on their march to Yorktown, early in the siege of which place he fell, covered with glory. He was promoted to adjutant-general just before his death.—*Jas. Williamson.*

chusetts regiments, commanded by Colonels Shephard, Wigglesworth, Bigelow, and Vose, proceeded to Rhode Island to strengthen the army of Gen. Sullivan.

In June, 1779, Jeremiah Miller, his captain, was appointed pay master of the regiment, and Lieut. Williams took the command of the company ; from which time until the war closed, he almost constantly performed the duty of captain. In July, his regiment marched to West Chester county, N. Y., and the following winter, (known as the *cold winter*,) Gen. Glover's brigade was cantoned at a place called *Budd's Huts*, situated three miles east of West Point ; on the road leading from Fishkill to Peekskill. The snow was deep while the huts were building, and the *water did not drop from the eaves of those rude dwellings for forty successive days*. Part of the army wintered the same season three miles back of West Point, in what were called the *York Huts*. The logs for Budd's huts were brought together by the soldiers with drag-ropes.

In the summer of 1780, Capt. Williams was on duty on the borders of New York and New Jersey ; and in the summer of 1781, in the vicinity of Kings' Ferry, until September, when he marched with the army of Gen. Washington to York-Town. During the siege of that place by the American and French armies, two strong redoubts thrown up by the enemy were carried ; the one on the bank of the river by American light infantry under Gen. Lafayette, and the other by French grenadiers under the Baron de Viomenil. To divide the attention of the enemy while the redoubts were being stormed, Col. Laurens, who had recently returned from a foreign embassy, was required, as his *first military duty*, to select two trusty captains, each with forty chosen men from Scammel's corps of infantry, (ten from a company,) and march in between the redoubts. Captains Williams, of the Massachusetts line, and Betts, of the Connecticut, were the two officers chosen for this honorable task. A heavy fire was opened from both redoubts and the army in front upon the troops under Laurens ; but it was illy directed, and soon silenced after an entrance was forced by the *forlorn hope* : and what is surprising,

not one of Laurens' command was either killed or wounded. Opposition had nearly ceased when Laurens and his men entered the redoubt carried by the American infantry. Charles Miller, an Irish lieutenant, and the bringer up of the fourth platoon under Williams, was a very large man, and could not enter the passage forced. Said he to his comrades, "*My lads, take me on your bayonets and toss me in !*" Said Betts to Williams, as Britain's flag gave place to the stripes of liberty, "This is the thirteenth engagement I have been in during the war, and this is the best of them all." Those redoubts were carried on the 14th of October.\*

In December, 1781, Capt. Williams returned to Westchester county, where he wintered and continued in service in that vicinity a good part of the year 1782. On his return from Yorktown, Capt. Hitchcock of the light infantry, had some difficulty with Lieut. Stone, of his own company. The quarrel ended in a duel and the captain was killed ; soon after which Williams was transferred to the command of his company. It is worthy of remark that but little dueling took place in the American army in the Re-

\*The following incidents of the siege were communicated to the author just before this work went to press, by *Nicholas Hill*, of Montgomery county, who belonged to the New York state troops at the time. At some period of the siege a bomb-battery of the enemy, situated not far from York river, was carried by a party of Americans in the night, who entered as their foes left it. A detachment of American troops arriving after its capture, supposing it still occupied by the British, discharged their pieces in at the entrance, but most fortunately no one was injured within, and a pleasing recognition took place immediately after. The next day the enemy opened upon the lost battery, a heavy cannonade from one of their inner works. A board projected from an exposed part of it, which was a source of inconvenience to its new occupants, and an axe was procured with which to cut it off. A temporary silence prevailed, when Christopher Van Voast, a native of Schenectada, snatched up the axe, and exclaiming "You're all a pack of d—d cowards!" sprang up, as a volunteer, to do it. He raised the axe, but ere it had descended to the board a cannon shot passed through his body, cutting it nearly in two. About the same time an American soldier named Smith, was observed to fall near the battery, and on going to him his fellows found he was dead. There was no external mark of injury about him, but on examining his head, the skull was found broken in as was determined by a surgeon, from atmospheric concussion, caused by the passage of a cannon shot near it. Mr. Hill, said he did not believe the skull was fractured in the manner decided, but supposed the injury to have proceeded from the sudden fall upon the ground.



volution, the moral part of the community sternly rebuking the practice. A quarrel between Gen. Poor and Brigade Major Porter, which originated, it is believed, in a reproof of the former to the latter for his rakish conduct, resulted in a duel, which took place in 1780, near Perames, New Jersey, in which the general, a fine officer, was killed.

In the summer of 1782, a celebration took place at West Point in honor of the birth of the Dauphin of France, at which festival Capt. Williams was present, and which, from memory, he thus describes. A large bower was erected about eighty or one hundred rods from the river, covered with evergreens and beautifully festooned at the ends. Many natural flowers, interwoven with flower-de-lis cut from tissue paper, decorated the sides and ends. Long poles for the bower were brought on the shoulders of the soldiers, who on casting them down were sometimes heard, the one to exclaim with earnestness, "God bless the Dauphin!" while his comrade at the other end, with equal zeal would add, "God d—n the Dauphin!" An ox roasted whole for the occasion was eaten within the bower, and after his bones had been removed, and a few bumpers of wine drank, Gen. Washington, who appeared in unusually good spirits, said to his officers, "Let us have a dance!" Selecting a partner among the officers, the great commander led the dance, in a "*gander hop*," or "*stag dance*," as called in modern times, when no ladies are present, to the favorite old tune, *Soldier's Joy*, played by a military band. Washington was a very graceful dancer, and presented a fine figure among his officers. The numerous regiments of troops there convened were paraded towards evening along the mountain back of Fort Putnam, and upon the high grounds on the east side of the river, to fire a salute. The regiments were under the command of quarter master sergeants, and the companies commanded by orderly sergeants: not a single commissioned officer holding any command among the thousands thus conspicuously paraded. As may be supposed, the non-commissioned commanders were justly proud of the confidence reposed in their integrity. At a given signal, a *running fire* began at the south end of the line and

extended along the west side of the river to the north end, when the *feu-de-joie* was caught by the troops on the opposite side of the river and carried south. Thus did the rattle of musketry three times make its distant circuit along the Hudson, in honor of an event which gave a prospective heir to the crown of France, then the efficient ally of our republic,—after which, the troops, in the twilight of a lovely evening, returned to the Point. On the day of this festival, an extra one day's ration was served to the soldiers, and all seemed equally to enjoy the holiday, which passed off without an accident to mar its pleasantry.

The following is one verse of a song believed to have been written either for or on account of the celebration at West Point, for which I am indebted to the memory of my friend J. H. T.

“ Hark, hark, a feu-de-joie—makes trembling ether ring,  
Whilst shouting armies hail, a Prince, a future King,  
On whom may Heaven with liberal hand  
Her choicest gifts bestow :  
May peace and wisdom bless his reign ,  
And laurels deck his brow :  
A Dauphin's born, let cannon loud  
Bid echo rend the sky.  
*Chorus.*—Long life to Gallia's King,  
Columbia's great ally.”

In the army arrangement of the Revolution, the colonel, lieutenant colonel, and major of each regiment of state troops, retained the command of a company in the same called *theirs*, to which no captain was assigned. The immediate command of those companies usually devolved on subaltern officers; that of the colonel on a captain lieutenant; that of lieutenant colonel on a first lieutenant; and that of major on a second lieutenant.

Capt. Williams continued in the army of Washington near the Hudson until the British evacuated New-York, on the 25th of Nov. 1783, at which time he accompanied the victorious army in its entree to that city; and was present at Francis' Tavern, or “*Black Sam's*” as familiarly called, when Gen. Washington took leave of his officers on the 4th. of Dec. On leaving the disbanded army Capt. W. could say—what few others could—he was never mustered during the whole war, *sick* or absent, when duty

required his presence. At the close of the war he became a member of the Massachusetts Cincinnati. Those Associations composed chiefly of military officers, were formed in the several states with a general society of the United States, of which Gen. Washington was president. About the year 1808, Capt. Williams removed from Massachusetts to Onondaga county, N. Y. He now (1845) resides in the town of Schoharie ; and although in his ninety-sixth year, few young men read more than he does. He from choice cuts his own fire-wood, works his own garden, &c.; and the fall he was ninety years old, he revived the trade of his youth by framing two good sized buildings. He has ever continued to be a firm supporter of that government he helped to establish. He has long been an exemplary Christian—and imbibing in childhood the moral principles of a *New England mother* ; he has proven himself a worthy, honest and respected citizen. He still writes a legible hand without glasses. His answer to the question—Were you a young man with the knowledge you now have, would you enter the army if a war should break out ?—was, “Yes, I think I should. Yes, *I am pretty sure I should.*”

I have made several quotations from the Military Journal of Major, afterwards Col. Benjamin Tallmadge, an active and efficient officer of the Revolution. This private journal, which was prepared after the war at the request of his children to exhibit his military life, contains memoranda of an interesting character ; and from it I glean the following additional facts.\*

Col. Tallmadge was the second of five sons of the Rev. Benj. Tallmadge, a settled minister at Brookhaven, L. I.

He graduated at Yale College with literary honors in 1773, soon after which he was called to the charge of a high school in Weathersfield, Ct. Capt. Chester of Weathersfield, having been appointed a colonel of state troops, and tendering young Tallmadge a lieutenant's commission, with the appointment of adjutant of his regiment, the student laid aside his books, and the con-

\*For the loan of this Journal, the author would here acknowledge his indebtedness to the Hon. John P. Cushman, of Troy, a son-in-law of Colonel Tallmadge

templated study of the law, and entered the service of his country. He was commissioned a lieutenant by Gov. Trumbull, June 20th, 1776, and received a warrant as adjutant, bearing the same date. He marched with the army of Washington to New York; was engaged in the disastrous battle of Long Island, and in several skirmishes above New York, in one of which Brigade Major Wyllis was made prisoner, and he was given his station. At the battle of White Plains, he was with a division of the army under Gen. Spencer, who engaged the Hessian troops under Gen. Rahl, when the Americans, pressed by overpowering numbers, were obliged to fall back to *Chadderton's Hill*, then occupied by Gen. McDougall. As the adjutant was about to enter the Bronx with the rear of the army, the Rev. Dr. Trumbull, their chaplain, sprang upon his horse behind him, with an impetus that carried them both headlong, with saddle and accoutrements, into the river. Regaining their feet, they, however, forded the stream in time to make good their retreat. Long poles, with iron pikes, supplied the want of bayonets, at this time, in the American camp. Near the close of the year, a new organization of the army took place, when Lieut. Tallmadge received the command of a company of dragoons, under Col. Elisha Sheldon.

Early in the spring of 1777, a squadron of four companies of Sheldon's corps, under the command of Tallmadge, the senior captain, joined the army of Washington, near Middlebrook, N. J. His own troop was mounted entirely on dapple gray horses, of which, under black mountings, he acknowledges he felt proud. On the 25th June, 1777, he was engaged in the battle of *Short Hills*, between the Americans, under Lord Sterling, and the enemy, under Lord Cornwallis, in which the former lost four field pieces a second time. About this period Capt. Tallmadge was promoted to major of cavalry. In 1778, while actively employed with the army in New Jersey, Maj. T. opened a private correspondence with some persons in New York, for Gen. Washington, which lasted through the war.

About the 1st of July, 1779, when the dragoons of Col. Sheldon were stationed below North Castle, a large body of the ene-

my's light horse and infantry, under Lord Rawdon, attacked them in the night. The onset was impetuous, and the Americans, borne down by superior numbers, and flanked by infantry, found it necessary no retreat—doing which the servant of Maj. Tallmadge was wounded and captured by the enemy, and with him his master's horse and valise, the latter containing *twenty guineas*. In the summer of 1780, Gen. Washington honored Maj. T. with a separate command, consisting of a body of horse and two companies of infantry, formed from dismounted dragoons. He took a station soon after at North Stamford, Conn., and while there Gen. Parsons proposed a joint enterprise of their forces against the enemy's garrison at Lloyd's Neck, on Long Island, which was abandoned, owing to the treachery of the agent employed by the general to gain the requisite information.

“On the 5th of September, 1779,” [says the journal,] “I undertook an expedition against the enemy on Lloyd's Neck, Long Island. At this place, and on a promontory or elevated piece of ground next to the Sound, between Huntington Harbor and Oyster Bay, the enemy had established a strongly fortified post, where they kept a body of about five hundred troops. In the rear of this garrison a large band of marauders encamped, who, having boats at command, continually infested the Sound and our shores. Having a great desire to break up the banditti of freebooters, on the evening named I embarked my detachment, amounting in the whole to about one hundred and thirty men, at Shipand Point, near Stamford, at eight o'clock in the evening, and by ten we landed on Lloyd's Neck. Having made my arrangements we proceeded in different divisions to beat up their quarters. Our attack was so sudden and unexpected that we succeeded in capturing almost the whole party, a few only escaping into the bushes, from whence they commenced firing on my detachment; which gave the alarm to the garrison. This prevented our attempting any attack upon the outposts and guards of the fort, and after destroying all the boats we could find, as well as the huts of these refugees, we returned with our prisoners to our boats, and embarked for Connecticut, where we landed in safety before sunrise the next morning, and without the loss of a single man.”

As the fall advanced Maj. Tallmadge revived his project of an expedition to Long Island. Through agents he obtained accurate returns of a fortification in Suffolk county, called Fort St. George. It was constructed “at a point which projects into the South Bay



on *Smith's Manor*, being the enemy's easternmost defence." It is thus described in the journal :

"I found it to be a triangular inclosure of several acres of ground, at two angles of which was a strongly barricaded house, and at the third, a fort, with a deep ditch and wall encircled by an *abattis* of sharpened pickets, projecting at an angle of forty-five degrees. The fort and houses were entirely connected with a strong stockade, twelve feet high, every piece sharpened and fastened to each other by a transverse rail strongly bolted to each. The work was nearly finished."

Having obtained the necessary information he proposed to the Commander-in-chief to destroy the works, who concluded the expedition too dangerous to warrant its undertaking. Not willing to abandon his project, Maj. T. visited the island in person about the 1st of November, to ascertain the then state of the works. He learned "that the fortress was completed, and was the depository of stores, dry-goods, groceries, and arms, from whence Suffolk county could be supplied." Provided with an accurate draft of the fort, and apprised that a large quantity of forage was collected at Coram, from the east end of the island, he again importuned Gen. Washington to sanction a contemplated visit, who, on the 11th day of November, signified his assent by letter. The expedition is thus entered in the journal :

"All preparations necessary being made, on the 21st of November, at about four o'clock, P.M., I embarked my detachment composed of two companies of dismounted dragoons, (and in all short of one hundred selected men,) at Fairfield, and the same evening at nine o'clock, we landed at a place on Long Island called the *Old Man's*. I was obliged to go so far east to avoid a large body of the enemy which laid at Huntington and its vicinity, partly in our direct route from Stamford. Soon after we landed, say by ten o'clock, I put the troops in motion to cross Long Island. We had not gone far, say four or five miles, before the wind began to blow from the southeast, and the rain soon followed. I faced the troops about, returned to our boats, which were drawn up and concealed in the bushes. There we remained through the night and the next day, and at evening the rain abated, and I again ordered the troops to march for our destined place on the south side of Long Island. At four o'clock next morning I found we were within two miles of Fort St. George, when we halted a short time to take refreshment. Having made my arrangements for the plan of attack, I placed two small detachments under the command of subaltern officers of high

spirit, at different positions from the fort, with orders to keep concealed until the enemy should fire on my column. Just as the day began to dawn, I put my detachment in motion. The pioneers who preceded my column had reached within forty yards of the stockade before they were discovered by the enemy. At this moment, the sentinel in advance of the stockade, halted his march, looked attentively at our column, demanded "who comes there?" and fired. Before the smoke from his gun had cleared his vision, my sergeant, who marched by my side, reached him with his bayonet, and prostrated him. This was the signal for the other troops to move forward, when all seemed to vie with each other to enter the fort. So resolute were the men, that a breach was soon made in the stockade, where the rear platoon halted to prevent the prisoners from escaping. I led the column directly through the *grand parade* against the main fort, which we carried with the bayonet in less than ten minutes, not a musket being loaded. At the same instant that I entered one side of the fort, the officers commanding the smaller detachments mounted the ramparts on the other sides, and the watchword, *Washington and Glory!* was repeated from three sides of the fort at the same time. While we were standing, elated with victory, in the centre of the fort, a volley of musketry was discharged from the windows of one of the large houses, which induced me to order my whole detachment to load and return the fire. I soon found it necessary to lead the column directly to the house, which being strongly barricaded required the aid of the pioneers with their axes. As soon as the troops could enter, the confusion and conflict was great. A considerable portion of those who had fired after the fort was taken and the colours had been struck, were thrown headlong from the second story to the ground. Having forfeited their lives by the usages of war, all would have been killed had I not ordered the slaughter to cease. The prisoners, being secured, it was soon discovered that the shipping, which laid near the fort, loaded with stores, &c., were getting under weigh. The guns of the fort were brought to bear on them, and they were soon secured. All things were now safe and quiet, and I had never seen the sun rise more pleasantly. It became necessary to demolish the enemy's works, as far as possible, which was done: an immense quantity of stores of various kinds, English, &c., were destroyed. The shipping and their stores were also burnt up. Some valuable articles of dry goods were made up in bundles, placed on the prisoners' shoulders, who were pinioned two and two, and thus carried across the island to our boats. The work of capturing and destroying this fortress being effected, at eight o'clock, A.M., I put the troops under march to recross the island to our boats. Having given the command of the detachment to Capt. Edgar, with orders to halt at a given point near the middle of the island, I selected ten or twelve men, and mounted them on horses taken at the fort, with which I intended to destroy the King's magazine of forage at Coram. This place was nearly

half way to the place where a large body of British troops were encamped, east of Huntington. I reached the place in about an hour and a half; made a vigorous charge upon the guard placed to protect it; set it on fire [some three hundred tons of hay], and in about an hour and a half more reached the place where I had ordered the troops to halt, having rode some fifteen or sixteen miles. As I arrived at the spot, I was gratified to see the head of the detachment, under Capt. Edgar advancing with the prisoners. As none of us had halted since we parted, we sat down for nearly an hour and refreshed. After this we took up our line of march, by four o'clock reached our boats, and before sunset we were all afloat on the Sound; by midnight, or one o'clock next morning, every boat arrived on Fairfield beach, although we had entirely lost sight of each other in the darkness of the night. This service was executed entirely without the loss of one man from my detachment, and one only was badly wounded, and him we brought off. The enemy's loss was seven killed and wounded, most of them mortally. We took one lieutenant colonel commandant, one captain, one lieutenant, one surgeon, and fifty rank and file, with a host of others in the garrison."

On reporting the result of his expedition to the Commander-in-chief, Maj. Tallmadge requested permission to give his troops the spoils they had borne from the captured fortress, to which he received the following reply :

"MORRISTOWN, 28th Nov., 1780.

"Dear Sir—Both your Letters of the 25th came to my hands this day. I received with much pleasure the report of your successful Enterprise upon Fort St. George, and the vessel with stores in the harbor; and was particularly well pleased with the destruction of the hay, which must, I should conceive, be severely felt by the enemy at this time.

"I beg of you to accept my thanks for your judicious planning, and spirited execution of this business, and that you will offer them to the Officers and Men who shared the honor of the Enterprise with you.

"The gallant behavior of Mr. Muirson gives him a fair claim to an appointment in the second Regt. of Dragoons, or any other of the State to which he belongs, where there is a vacancy; and I have no doubt of his meeting with it accordingly, if you will make known his merits, with these sentiments in his favor.

"You have my free consent to reward your gallant party with the little booty they were able to bring from the Enemy's works.

"With much esteem and regard, I am, Dear Sir,

"Your most obed't Servt,  
GO. WASHINGTON."

The following honorable notice of Maj. Tallmadge's success over the enemy on Long Island, is found on the Journal of Congress for 1780, under date of Dec. 6th, that body having been apprised of the affair some days before by Gen. Washington.

"While Congress are sensible of the patriotism, courage and perseverance of the officers and privates of their regular forces, as well as the militia throughout these United States, and of the military conduct of the principal commanders in both, it gives them pleasure to be so frequently called upon to confer marks of distinction and applause for enterprises which do honor to the profession of arms, and claim a high rank among military achievements. In this light they view the enterprise against Fort George, on Long Island, planned, and conducted with wisdom and great gallantry by Maj. Tallmadge, of the light dragoons, and executed with intrepidity and complete success by the officers and soldiers of his detachment.

"*Ordered*, therefore, That Maj. Tallmadge's report to the Commander-in-chief be published, with the preceding minute, as a tribute to distinguished merit, and in testimony of the sense Congress entertain of this brilliant service."

"No person but a military man," says the journal of Col. T., "knows how to appreciate the honor bestowed, when the Commander-in-chief and the Congress of the United States return their thanks for a military achievement."

Contemplating an expedition against a British garrison of eight hundred men at Lloyd's Neck, and that of Fort Slongo, eight miles eastward of it, guarded by one hundred and fifty men, Maj. Tallmadge again visited Long Island, April 22, 1781, to obtain accurate information. Submitting his plan of intended operations to Gen. Washington for the capture of these posts, and clearing the sound of the enemy's small craft, with the aid of more troops, and the co-operation of the French frigates, it was favorably received, and he was furnished with a flattering letter of introduction to Count Rochambeau, then at Rhode Island, for the naval force. The absence of the vessels of the size wanted, prevented the prosecution of the enterprise. In the fall of this year, Maj. Tallmadge renewed his project of annoying the enemy on Long Island.

"The fortress at *Treadwell's Neck*, called Fort Slongo, [says the journal,] seemed to demand attention, and on the 1st of October I



moved my detachment of light infantry into the neighborhood of Norwalk; at the same time I directed a suitable number of boats to be assembled at the mouth of Saugatuck river, east of the town of Norwalk. On the evening of October 2d, 1781, at nine o'clock, I embarked a part of my detachment, and placed Maj. Trescott at the head of it, with orders to assail the fort on a particular point. The troops landed on Long Island by four o'clock, and at the dawn of day the attack was made and the fortress subdued. The block house, and other combustible materials, were burnt, and the troops and prisoners returned in safety, bringing off one piece of handsome brass field-artillery."

When the campaign of 1782 was opened, many felt as though the independence of the country had already been secured by the capture of Cornwallis and his army, but Gen. Washington, whatever may have been his private opinion "inculcated upon his troops the necessity of strict discipline, that they might be prepared for any emergency." Many supernumerary officers were permitted to retire from the army early this season, the most efficient being retained in service. As this year was one of comparative inactivity, the soldier's life became irksome, and he sighed for employment.

Towards the close of the year 1782, Major Tallmadge having been informed that six hundred of the enemy had encamped at Huntington, Long Island, conceived the plan of "beating up their quarters." He disclosed his project in person to Gen. Washington, in the latter part of November, and obtained his permission to undertake it, the general claiming to name the time. The 5th of December was the day fixed upon, when the Commander intended to execute an enterprise on the Hudson—which was, to throw a large detachment of his troops below Fort Washington, while he moved down with the main body to Fort Independence and Kingsbridge, thus bringing the enemy between two fires. On the evening of the day named, Maj. Tallmadge assembled his troops at *Shipand Point*, where his boats had been ordered. His forces, some seven hundred men, consisting of four companies of infantry, a party of dismounted dragoons, to mount the captured horses, and a body of Connecticut levies, began to embark at sunset; but the half had not left the shore, when a western storm arising, they were called back, the boats drawn on shore and turn-



ed up for a shelter. The Sound was agitated the next day, and at night became quiet, and the troops were beginning a second time to embark, but another gale arising, the troops were sheltered as on the previous night. Apprised on the morning of the 7th, that three of the enemy's boats from Long Island had taken refuge and were wind-bound on the Norwalk islands, a few miles east of the point, Maj. Tallmadge despatched six sail boats under Capt. Brewster, to give some account of them. Two were captured, after a spirited contest, in crossing the Sound, there about twelve miles wide, and the third escaped to land. Capt. Brewster received a bullet in the breast, which passed through the body, but recovered of the wound. The wind again rising on the third night, the expedition to the island was abandoned. The contemplated movement of Gen. Washington, on the evening of the 5th, was prevented by several British vessels having moved up that day, and anchored above Fort Washington.

In the winter of 1782 and '83, considerable illicit intercourse was carried on by traders along the Sound with the merchants of New York, and boats thus employed often fell into the hands of the vigilant Americans. Informed that a public armed vessel, in the employ of the government, was actively employed in the traffic "technically called the *London trade*," Maj. Tallmadge proposed to punish the offenders. The craft was a large sloop called the *Sheeldham*, Capt. Hoyt. Furnished with a copy of her invoice of goods, and notified of her expected arrival at Norwalk, Maj. T. repaired to that place with a party of dragoons, and had the satisfaction of seeing her approach the harbor. She anchored near the *Old Wells*, soon after which he went on board with a warrant, and constable to serve it. Making known his errand, the captain flew into a passion, and threatened to throw him overboard. While the intrepid major was endeavoring to reason with the dealer in contraband wares, the latter weighed anchor, hoisted sails, and stood out into the Sound, with a breeze from the northwest. When ordered to put back, he not only refused, but swore he would throw his guest overboard. The rest of the farce is thus noted in the journal:

“ My captain continued his course towards Lloyd’s Neck, where the enemy’s fleet lay, until we reached the middle of the Sound. I inquired of him where he was going, when he informed we with an oath, he would carry me over to the enemy. I informed him that for such an offence, by our martial law, he exposed himself to be punished with death. He professed to care nothing for the consequences. I maintained my former course, and sternly ordered him to put about his vessel and return to Norwalk, assuring him that if he executed his threat I would have him hanged as high as Haman hung if ever I returned, as I did not doubt I should. The time now became very critical, for we were rapidly approaching the enemy, when I again commanded him to put about his ship and return. He began to hesitate, and in a few minutes ordered his men to put about; and then steered directly back into Norwalk harbor. As soon as he came to anchor down at the *Old Wells*, the captain went ashore in his boat, and I never saw him again. I now found myself in the peaceable possession of the vessel, and its cargo. On taking up the scuttle in the cabin, I found an assortment of English goods corresponding with my invoice, which I had duly libeled and condemned. Thus ended my hazardous contest with the captain of the *Sheeldham*, a man void of principle, and unworthy the commission he held.”

One of the enemy’s sloops of war having been seen repeatedly to cross the Sound and anchor under Stratford Point, Conn., where she went to barter merchandize for produce, measures were taken to capture her. At Bridgeport, Maj. Tallmadge met Capt. Amos Hubbel, who had a suitable vessel, and readily engaged in the enterprise. The captain agreed to bring his craft along side the hostile ship, if indemnified against her loss in case of capture by the enemy, to which proposition Maj. Tallmadge readily assented. On the 20th of February, 1783, when the English sloop was at the point, the major placed forty-five men of his detachment, under the immediate command of lieutenants *Rhea* and *Hawley*, with Capt. Brewster’s boat’s crew of continental troops, on board of Capt. Hubbel’s vessel, the whole to be commanded by Capt. Brewster. Capt. Hubbel, taking the helm in person, sailed at two o’clock, P.M., and at four was within hail of the foe. The American troops were kept concealed until the vessels were brought in contact. As they neared, the enemy opened a broadside, which crippled their antagonist considerably in the mast and rigging; but Capt. Hubbel, with great presence of mind, brought her up

gallantly to the work. The troops, at a given signal, appeared on deck, discharged a volley of balls, and under Capt. Brewster boarded and carried the enemy at the point of the bayonet, "as in a moment," nearly every man on board being either killed or wounded. Not one of Brewster's men were harmed, nor was the vessel materially injured. In a few hours both vessels were moored in safety at *Black Rock harbor*. The affair being duly reported to Gen. Washington, he expressed his thanks to Maj. Tallmadge by letter, ordered the condemnation of the prize, and the avails thereof to be distributed among the troops who captured it.

In view of the disbanding the army, on the 10th day of May, 1783, a meeting of the American officers was held to organize the association, afterwards called "The Society of the Cincinnati," at which the Baron de Steuben, the senior officer, presided. Generals Knox, Huntington, and Hand, and Capt. Shaw, were appointed to prepare a written form or constitution expressive of its object; and at a meeting held at the quarters of Steuben on the 13th of May, their report was adopted. Of the State Society organized in the Connecticut line, Maj. Tallmadge was chosen treasurer for several years, and until he became its president. Most of the state legislatures granted acts of incorporation to these associations, but that of Connecticut refused a charter, and the society disbanded, giving the balance of its funds to Yale College.

In the summer of 1783, after preliminary articles of peace had been announced, Maj. Tallmadge, with the approbation of Gen. Washington, proceeded to New York, under the sanction of a flag, to grant that protection the times demanded, to such persons as had transmitted intelligence of the enemy's doings from time to time during the war, to Maj. T. and others employed by the Commander-in-chief to procure it. Private emissaries, in other words *secret spies*, employed for years in the American service were thus protected against the insults of their countrymen, who, on entering the city, might otherwise have treated them with indignity, instead of merited respect. Several *Enoch Crosbys* were secretly engaged in the Revolution in transmitting to Gen. Washington, as best they could, important information of the enemy's movements in and around New York.

Maj. Tallmadge was with the troops under Gen. Washington, who entered New York on the day it was evacuated by the enemy. On this occasion, Gen. Knox, at the head of a select corps, led the van of the American army. "The Commander-in-chief, accompanied by Gov. Clinton, and their respective suites, made their public entry into the city on horseback, followed by the lieutenant governor and members of the council, the officers of the army, eight abreast, and citizens on horseback, eight abreast, accompanied by the speaker of the Assembly and citizens, on foot, eight abreast. So perfect was the order of march, that entire tranquility prevailed, and nothing occurred to mar the general joy." Gov. Clinton gave a public dinner on the occasion, at which Gen. Washington and numerous other guests were present. On the Tuesday evening following, a most splendid display of *fire-works* took place near the *Bowling Green*, at the foot of Broadway. Maj. Tallmadge was also present, at *Francis' Tavern* in *Pearl street*, when Gen. Washington took final leave of his officers. They assembled at 12 o'clock, M., soon after which Gen. Washington appeared. After partaking of a little refreshment, in almost breathless silence, His Excellency filled his glass with wine, and turning to his companions in arms, thus addressed them: "With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you. I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable" The officers drank a glass of wine with him, after which he added: "I cannot come to each of you, but shall feel obliged if each of you will come and take me by the hand." Gen. Knox, being nearest, grasped his hand, and they embraced each other in silence. This was no doubt one of the most affecting interviews of the kind ever known. Each officer, in turn, imitating the example of Gen. Knox, embraced their Commander, and saluted him with a kiss, while their tears mingled profusely with his own. Waving his hand to his comrades, he left the room, and passing through a corps of light infantry paraded to receive him, he walked in silence to Whitehall, where a barge waited his arrival. His officers followed to the wharf, where a large multitude had

assembled to see his departure, and there witnessed his last salutation, which was the waving of his hat above the boat.

On the return of peace, Maj. Tallmadge again visited his native place, where the patriotic citizens got up a festival, roasted an ox whole, and made the major *master of ceremonies*.

On the 16th of March, 1784, Maj. Tallmadge led to Hymen's altar, the eldest daughter of the Hon. Wm. Floyd, of Mastick, Long Island ; after which he commenced the mercantile business in Litchfield, Connecticut. He was much respected for his talents, and represented the district in which he resided in the councils of the nation.



## CHAPTER XIX.

Among the officers of the American army deserving of notice, was Captain Thomas Machin, engineer; distinguished alike for his mathematical skill and patriotic bravery. He was born March 20th, 1744, O. S., four miles from Wolverhampton, Staffordshire, England. His father, John Machin, a distinguished mathematician, had two sons, John and Thomas. The former was killed at the siege of some town near the outlet of the Red Sea; and the latter was one of a corps of English cadets, which, with the British infantry became so distinguished for their bravery in the battle of Minden, Germany. The cadets, or fencibles, as called, were almost annihilated in that battle, which took place between the allied army under Ferdinand and the French, in August, 1759.

The Duke of Bridgewater, who may justly be styled the father of the canal navigation of Great Britain, projected *at his own expense* a canal from the coal measures on his lands in the town of Worsley to Manchester, a distance of some ten miles; obtaining his first act for the same at the session of parliament for the winter of 1758 and 59. A few years after he obtained an act for carrying a branch of it to Liverpool, nearly thirty miles. The former canal was carried by a stone aqueduct over the river Irwell, forty feet above its surface, so that shipping might pass under it in the river; and the latter over the Mercer. Those great works which were looked upon at their commencement by the incredulous as wholly impracticable, were prosecuted to completion under the direction of the celebrated engineer and mechanical inventor, James Brindley. Soon after Brindley began those works, Thomas Machin entered his employ; and it is not surprising that under such a tutor, he, too, should have become a

good practical engineer. He was engaged in taking the levels for the Duke's canal; and as clerk paid off many of the laborers employed by Brindley.

After making a voyage to the East Indies, Machin sailed for America, and arriving in 1772, took up his residence in the city of New York. The principal object of his voyage was to examine a copper mine in New Jersey. After a short stay in New York, he went to reside in Boston, and evidently intended a permanent residence; as he warmly espoused the cause of the Bostonians against his "father land." He was one of the celebrated *Boston tea party* of 1773. He was engaged and wounded (in one arm) in the conflict on Bunker's hill, while acting as lieutenant of artillery.

Mr. Machin received his first commission in the American service, as second lieutenant in the regiment of artillery, commanded by Col. Henry Knox, which was dated Jan. 18th, 1776. That the patriots of Massachusetts were not only acquainted with Lieut. Machin's skill as an engineer, but actually called it into requisition in laying out the fortifications for the American camp around Boston, the following papers will show.

"*Boston, June 19., 1776—Wednesday evening.*

"To Lieut. Machin, at Nantasket:

"Sir—I informed the committee that you could go to Sandwich on the survey if it could be taken this week; in consequence of which, we agreed that you might set out as soon as you thought proper, and begin the survey, and that we would follow, and be there next Tuesday. I beg you would let me see you to-morrow evening, that the committee may hear what to depend on.

"Sir, your most humble serv't-

"JAMES BOWDOIN."

"Lieut. Machin, the bearer hereof, being employed in y<sup>e</sup> Colony service, it is desired he may pass from hence to Sandwich and back without interruption.

"*Boston, June 20, 1778.*"

"JAMES BOWDOIN."

"*Camp at White Plains, August 9, 1778.*

"These are to certify, that the subscriber, being Aid-de-Camp to Maj. Gen'l Ward, in the year 1776, while stationed at Boston: General Ward directed Lieut. Thomas Machin, of the Artillery, to act as Engineer to erect fortifications for the defence of the

Town and Harbor of Boston, from the first of April, 1776, to the month of June following, which service he faithfully performed.

“JOSEPH WARD.”

Owing to the skillful manner in which Lieut. Machin had discharged the important task of laying out the fortifications around Boston, he was selected by the Commander-in-chief for the arduous duty of securing the navigation of the Hudson through the Highlands, as the following paper will show :

“*Head-Quarters, New-York, 21st July, 1776.*”

“Sir—You are without delay to proceed to Fort Montgomery, or Constitution, in the Highlands, on Hudson’s River, and put yourself under command of Col. George Clinton, or the commanding officer there,—to act as Engineer in compleating such works as are already laid out,—and such others as you, with the advice of Col. Clinton, may think necessary: ’Tis expected and required of you, that you pay close attention to this business, and drive on the works with all possible despatch. In case of an attack from the enemy, or in any action with them, you are to join and act with the Artillery on that station; and to return to your duty in the regiment as soon as you can be spared from the works.

“I am, sir, your most humble serv’t.

“GO. WASHINGTON.”

To the letter of instructions we find wafered the following paper:

“*Fort Montgomery, August 9th, 1776.*”

“A list of the carpenters that have entered into the Continental service under Capt. Burns: Stephen Concklin, Joseph Halsted, Joshua Sager, Silas White, John Young, John Homan, Gilbert Roberts, Barzilla Tuthill, Cornelius Van Vlack, James Scoldfield.”

“Capt. Burns—The above persons belonging to your company, being Artificers employed in the works here, you are therefore to have them at this place to be employed by and under the direction of Mr. Machin, the Engineer.

“GEO: CLINTON, Brig’r Gen’l.”

Gov. Clinton was promoted about the time Gen. Washington’s directions to Lieut. Machin were dated, and having occasion to leave the works, he placed his brother, Col. James Clinton, in temporary command to oversee them, as the following paper will show :

“*Fort Montgomery, 10th August, 1776.*”

“To Lieut. Machin—As I am now ordered to march with the new levies to Kings Bridge, and as you will want many necessities for compleating the new works we have begun on the south

side of Poplopin's Kill,\* and the works to be erected for securing the pass of Anthony's Nose. You are to use your best endeavors by all means in your power, (applying to Col. Clinton from time to time for his aid and advice) to purchase and procure such articles as may be wanted, of which the clerk of the Check is to keep a just account. The artificers already employed and such others as may be wanted, are, (in the erecting of these works) to be under your directions, for which purpose Col. Clinton will be given the necessary orders.

"I am your humble serv't,

"GEO. CLINTON, Brig. Gen."

Gen. Schuyler early saw the necessity of obstructing the navigation of the Hudson in the Highlands to prevent the passage of British shipping to Albany; and communicated to the N. York Council of Safety his wishes on that subject, as the following papers will show: and as they are found among the papers of Capt. Machin, there can be no doubt but he was the person employed to make the requisite survey.

"*Fishkill, Nov. 6, 1776.*

"Gent.—I am directed by the Committee of Safety to transmit you the enclosed extract of Gen. Schuyler's letter, and to request that you'll cause his request to be immediately complied with.

"I am, gentlemen, with esteem,

"Your very humble servant,

"PIERRE VAN CORTLANDT, V. Pres."

"To the Gent. of the Secret Committee."

"Extract of a letter from Gen'l Schuyler directed to Peter R. Livingston, Esq. President, &c. dated Albany, Nov. 3d, 1776.—I wish the Convention would order the depth and breadth of Hudson's River to be carefully taken at such places as they conceive would be most proper effectually to obstruct the navigation; Verplanck's Point, or Jan Canten Hook, may be proper places; perhaps the latter."

"(True extract.)

ROBT. BENSON, Sec'y."

Col. Rufus Putnam, an officer of merit, commanded the 5th Massachusetts regiment, and was promoted to Brig. Gen. near the close of the war. He was wall-eyed. The following paper from Col. Putnam† no doubt refers to the survey of the Hudson made agreeable to Gen. Schuyler's request.

\* These works, when completed, were called Fort Clinton.

† While Col. Putnam was on duty in the neighborhood of West Point, he

*“ Peekskill, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 1776.*

“ Sir—I beg you will not delay sending a sketch of the North River through the Highlands, with a geographical description of the country on the west side ; as I am going in a few days to wait on His Excellency with the best account of this part of the country that, without an actual survey, I am able to give. If you cannot send to me in two days, you must send it to His Excellency as soon as possible, for I can wait no longer.

“ Sir, your humble servant,

“ R. PUTNAM.”

“ To Lieut. Machin, Engineer.”

Jan. 7th, 1777, the State authorities took official cognizance of the doings of Capt. Machin, as appears by several resolutions on the “ Journal of the Committee of Safety.” His commission dates his rank as Captain Lieutenant of U. S. Artillery, on the 1st day of January, 1777, although it did not pass the office of the Board of War, until April 21st, 1780.

The succeeding papers directed “To Capt. Thomas Machin, at Murderer’s Creek,” one of which was without date, were evidently written while the navigation of the river was being obstructed, in 1777.

“ *To Capt. Machin:*

“ *Sir*—I have already directed that no more timber should be cut on Mr. Ellison’s land for the obstructions to be made in the river, (except it should be such long walnut pieces as could not be so conveniently had any where else,) until a proportionate share of timber for that use was also got on lands lying equally near the river. I am surprised, therefore, to hear that a company of carpenters are in his woods cutting away timber of every kind, which I trust must be without your order or knowledge. He is willing you should take such long walnut pieces as you want and can’t get as conveniently elsewhere ; other kind of timber we certainly

ascended Butter Hill with a party of his troops, and with their aid succeeded in prying off from its summit a rock which weighed many tons. Started from such an eminence, the immense mass came thundering down the mountain crushing the forest trees which impeded its onward course, and dashed into the Hudson. Sloops navigating the river sometimes pass it inland. Its course upon the mountain side was long visible from the water to the summit of the Hill, and was called PUTNAM’S PATH. The rock is called PUTNAM’S ROCK to this day. Some writers have fallen into the error of supposing the rock and its path called after Gen. Putnam.—*Capt. Eben Williams.*



can, and more so. I expect, therefore, you will direct the carpenters to desist cutting in his woods till further orders from me.

"I am your most obed't serv't,

"GEO. CLINTON."

"*New Windsor, 31st Jan'y, 1777.*

"*Dr. Sir*—I set out for Kingston to-morrow morning, where business will detain me a few days. I wished to have seen you before I set out. I cannot now expect it. I think the artificers neither go out early enough in the morning, or continue late enough in the evening, at work. I was surprised this day to see many break off a little after three in the afternoon. It was said they had not been home to dinner, but allowing that to be the case, from nine in the morning until three in the afternoon is not by any means a day's work. To cure this mischief I enclose you an *order* which you 'll publish among those employed, and endeavor to carry it into execution. If you think the hours are too long, make any alteration you think right; but pray, whatever hours are fixed on, contrive to make them work.

"I am in great haste your most obed't,

"GEO. CLINTON."

"*Capt. Machin.*"

"*Orders to be observed by the artificers and others employed in obstructing the navigation of Hudson's river, 13th Jan'y, 1777.*

"As high wages are given by the public at this season of the year, when the days are short and the weather fickle, in order to have this most necessary work (on which not only the safety of this State, but of the whole continent depends,) completed in due season:—It is therefore expected that those who are employed and receive the public's money, will be faithful in the service and do the most they can. It is the business of the master workmen who have contracted to carry on the work and taken the charge of small parties under them, to see that they are diligently employed and work faithfully. It is for this they are allowed extra wages, and it is expected that in this way they will earn, or in justice they cannot expect to receive it. The monthly pay rolls must be attested (if required,) by the master workmen, and an honest man can never return a man for a full day's pay who has not done a full day's work. This would be dishonest and punishable; but that every possible guard may be set against deception, and that all account for pay of artificers and others may stand fair and uncontrovertible, the engineer is to fix upon the hour in the morning at which all hands are to be at work—the hour they are to quit for dinner, the time when they are to return to work after dinner, and break off in the evening; and to cause the rolls to be called over by such person or persons as he shall appoint at those and such other times as he shall see fit; and mark the defaulters (if any,) that a proper deduction may be made from their wages. It is ex-

pected at present that those employed near the barracks will work at least eight hours every day, and those employed where the timber now lays, or at that distance, at least seven. The time for working each day to be lengthened when the days grow longer.

“GEO. CLINTON, *B. Gen'l.*”

Opposite is the facsimile of a letter from Gen. Washington “To Brigadier Gen. Knox, commanding the corps of Artillery.” It was written during the visit of Capt. Machin to the Commander-in-chief, at his winter quarters :

The following paper, which is without date, was no doubt written about the time Gen. Clinton visited Kingston :

“*Sir*—I am informed that the Inhabitants of Kingston are desirous of making some Works for the Defence of their town. I approve of their intentions, and wish to give them every assistance in my power in the execution of this business; and that the works may be constructed on a Plan most efficient and least expensive, I request you will repair to that place and assist in laying them out, in which Col. Bruyn will advise. It will not be practicable, neither do I conceive it necessary to enclose the town, as the houses are stone, and will form (if the Windows and Doors are properly secured) good Lines of Defence. Small Redoubts or block-houses, therefore, at the different and most commanding quarters of the Town, are all that to me appear necessary; which ought to be constructed each for a Piece or two of artillery, so as to clear the lines formed by the houses; and when it can be, conveniently, these should be so contiguous to each other as to be within the reach of Musquetry, which will be a saving of Ammunition. In constructing these works, it is to be observed that Artillery against them is not to be apprehended.

“I am your most obed’t serv’t.

“GEO. CLINTON.”

“*Capt. Machin.*”

By the next paper we perceive that Capt. Machin was given discretionary power, by Governor Clinton, to act in certain emergencies :

“*Dear Sir*—I received yours of this date. I approve your conduct in marching your men against those *Parricides*, and no pains must be spared to apprehend or destroy them. Major Logan, and every other Officer in both Counties, I know, will exert themselves

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Morris Town Jan: 29<sup>th</sup> 1777

Dear Sir,

I have no doubt but  
that in the new appointments  
of artillery officers, you thought  
of Mr. Machin in the manner  
he deserves - he is ever, as he is  
now here, and has heard no-  
thing from you on this subject,  
I cannot help reminding you  
of him, as he appears from  
observation, and information,  
to be a person of merit. -

He has also mentioned  
something to me respecting  
his pay, which you will care  
to be enquired into - he has  
received none, he says, since the  
month of May. Y<sup>r</sup> Obedt<sup>l</sup>

I am D<sup>r</sup> Sir Y<sup>r</sup> Obedt<sup>l</sup>  
J. Waples





on this occasion in drawing out the Militia for quelling this dangerous insurrection; nor must any risk be run in taking prisoners.

"I am your most obd't serv't

"*March, 10th, 1777.*

"GEO. CLINTON, B. Gen."

"P.S. A party will march towards the Forest of Dean, to guard the defiles there."

"*To Capt. Thomas Machin.*"

"*To Capt. Machin, at Capt. Nicolls'.*"

"*Dear Sir*—This will be handed you by Mr. Chambers from Marble Town, who has come down with 6 or 7 carpenters, to be employed in our works; and in a few days I expect as many more will be here from that quarter as will complete his company to 12. As these are men who were engaged at our request, when the others misbehaved and quit work, they must be employed—indeed, we can't have too many now. How you will find room for them I can't tell, but you are good at contrivance.

"I am your H. S.

"GEO. CLINTON."

"*11th March, 1777.*"

The following paper, from Gov. Clinton to Capt. Machin, shows the preparation making for the enemy's reception in the Highlands:

"*Dear Sir*—Let one know immediately whether twelve Pounders, having the trunions broke off, can be quicker repaired by stocking them, or fixing new trunions to them. If the former way is the speediest and best, I beg you would come down here immediately and bring such Artificers with you as can do them directly. If the latter way is the best, can't you spare Van Houton, your Smith, to work a while at this business at *Fort Constitution*? He shall be well used, and Barney will stay with him. On receipt hereof you will send down the two twelve Pounders at New Windsor, with the ammunition and stores belonging to them, to this Port. In their room I have ordered you the Brass 24 Pounder from Fishkill; it will suit you better, and you are to preserve her at all events; if she should be lost at your Port you will be in Disgrace forever. I expect you will have the 24 lb. to-morrow at your Port. If you come here yourself on an alarm, you will take care to leave behind you some persons who can use the 24 lb., and who will guard and save her. Gen. Putnam wants to know how you come forward with your Boom, and whether you meet any Obstructions in that Business which you did not foresee.

"I am your most obd't serv't.

"GEO. CLINTON."

"*Fort Montgomery, 3d July, 1777.*"

"P. S. Wont your scow, well manned, bring the guns down quicker and easier?"

By a memorandum, found among the Machin papers, it appears that the sum of *one hundred and fifty pounds* was paid in one month for teams "Employed in drawing Timber for the use of the works Obstructing the navigation of Hudson River," under his individual direction. Thirty shillings was the regular price paid per day for a teamster with two yoke of oxen.

In anticipation of an attack from the enemy, under Sir Henry Clinton, the following orders were issued by Gen. James Clinton :

*"Head Quarters, Fort Montgomery, July 10th, 1777.*

"The Signals to be given on the approach of the Enemy : On the firing of Two Cannon at Peekskill by Gen. Varnam one minute from each other ; Two will be fired by Gen. Huntington ; Two by Gen. Parsons ; to be answered by Two at Fort Independence ; Two at Fort Montgomery ; Two at Fort Constitution : and the Beacon there to be fired as usual ; to be answered by two from the Brass twenty-four Pounder, near New Windsor : upon this Signal, the Militia on the West side of Hudson's River, in the Counties of Orange and Ulster, as far up as Col. Harbrouk's Regiment, including the same, are to march by detachments, without further notice, as a Reinforcement of this Garrison, and the Militia on the East side of the River, as far up as Poughkeepsie, including Col. Freus' Regiment, to march for the reinforcing the Garrison under Gen. Putnam.

"This order is immediately to be published by the Commanding officer at Fort Constitution, and copies of it transmitted by him to Capt. Lieut. Machin, of the Artillery at New Windsor, that he may cause the same to be published there."

In the month of September Capt. Machin was engaged in the *recruiting service*, as his correspondence with Col. John Lamb, his commanding officer, doth show.

Early in October, to make a diversion in favor of Gen. Burgoyne, Sir Henry Clinton ascended the Hudson with his army, and succeeded, with a severe loss, in storming Forts Montgomery and Clinton, on the west bank of the Hudson, six miles below West Point—one on either side of Poplopin's kill. At the time of the attack on the former fort, Capt. Machin managed a heavy gun which did fearful execution in the ranks of the assailants. As the army drew near the fort, late in the afternoon, Machin saw a man step from the ranks of the enemy and poise his musket to fire at him. He had just prepared his ordnance for a discharge,

loaded to the muzzle with round, grape and double headed bar shot, the latter projecting from the gun; as he caught the eye of the soldier who had raised his piece to fire on him. Machin's gunner in the act of applying the match, was shot down by his side, and the former snatching the linstock from the hand of the fallen hero applied it to the gun, the contents of which mowed a fearful swath, causing the assailants to fall back. At the instant the match was applied, Machin received a bullet in his body, and retired with the wounded. The ball entered his breast and came out under his right shoulder. A man who was aiding the wounded captain, near sundown, in his retreat, was shot and fell upon him, and it was with no little difficulty he extricated himself from his dying comrade. It began to grow dark, when Machin asked a retreating soldier *if he could not help him*. "*It is a d—d good fellow who can help himself*," was the unfeeling reply, as the man passed on. Capt. Machin was soon after taken into a boat and thus made his escape. On the morning following, Capt. Miligan of Orange county, who had been wounded the preceding evening in one knee, was discovered near the river, by the enemy, of whom he begged for quarters; instead of granting which, his unfeeling foes bayoneted and threw him down the rocks. While recovering from his wounds Capt. Machin was entertained at the house of Gov. Clinton, from whose family he received the kindest treatment. The Americans, on losing Forts Montgomery and Clinton, abandoned Fort Constitution as untenable, leaving in their retreat considerable booty to the enemy. Gen. Vaughan then ascended the river as far as Kingston, burning it and destroying a large quantity of military stores there collected; soon after which most of the army returned to New York city; evacuating the captured forts, but retaining and fortifying Stoney Point, a few miles below Forts Montgomery and Clinton.

Early in December Capt. Machin was so far recovered from his wound as to be engaged in his regular duties, as the following Clinton papers will show.

“ *Little Britain, 1st Dec'r, 1777.*

“ *Dear Machin*—I wrote to Doctor Tappen and Maj. Billings some time ago to endeavor to provide me a house at or near Pough-

keepsie, providing the legislature determined to meet at that place ; since which I have not heard from them. Mrs. Clinton is anxious to get settled again, and as I believe Poughkeepsie would be her choice as well as the place where the legislature will meet, I will be much obliged to you if you will be kind enough to take a ride there, consult with Maj. Billings and Doct. Tappen, and concert with them—endeavor to procure some convenient house for me. It will be no objection should it be a mile or two out of town.

"I offered Capt. Harris the use of my house this winter for his family. He thinks it would be too lonesome for her, [his wife.] But as Mrs. Bedlow is not to move to New Windsor, suppose Capt. Harris was to move into my house and you was to take your lodgings with them ; and indeed Capt. Harris will be at home great part if not the whole of the winter. Will you mention this to the captain ?

"I have a cot at my house out of which the militia stole the irons : will you get it repaired for me, as I have no other bed or bedstead.

"I am Dr. Sir, yours sincerely,

"GEO. CLINTON."

"P. S. If you go to Poughkeepsie advise me of it by a line. Maj. Taylor will furnish you with a horse for the purpose."

"*Poughkeepsie, 13th Dec., 1777.*

"*Dear Machin*—There are some mahogany boards in and about our mill which Mrs. Clinton brought from Capt. Nevin's, which I wish you would measure and secure for me. You forgot to send my razors ; pray let me have them by first good conveyance.

"Yours sincerely,

"GEO. CLINTON."

"P. S. We are all well.

"Mrs. Clinton's compliments to you."

"*Poughkeepsie, 19th Dec'r, 1777.*

"*Dear Sir*—I am much obliged to you for the wood, &c., you have sent me by Serg't Halsted. The sloop carries but six and a half cords of wood : I have therefore got but that quantity. The Sheep the sergeant tells me he put up in my stable and gave them in charge of some militia that were threshing : in the morning they were gone, so that I have not got them. I suppose, or at least it is likely, they stole them. I wish you would try to find them again, and when you come to see us throw them in the bottom of your s[leigh] and you shall eat part of them. Sam gave your saddle-bags to Col. Dubois' Bob, who promised to take care of them for you. Col. Taylor promised to send Mrs. Clinton two pots, which he has forgot ; perhaps you may have an opportunity to send or bring them. As to my house and farm, I leave it entirely at your discretion and disposal. I wish to oblige Capt. Harris, but if he declines you can let it to who [whom] you please. I wish to have the timber saved as much as possible.



"I had letters from Head Quarters dated the 3d and 10th instant. No News there. Gen. Washington is anxious about securing the river. Putnam is ordered to turn his whole attention to that business, and will be up with his troops in a few days. Colonels Webb and Ely were taken in a sloop with about thirty men, crossing to Long Island, by an armed brig. Gen. Parsons has had a brush with the Hessians, beat them and took one field piece, it is said, but wants confirmation. Ensign Adamson about a week ago broke his parole and went off, but was fortunately taken with six other rascals, in Mile-Square—two of them negroes he had seduced off. Mrs. Clinton joins in best respects to you and love to Caty. I wish to see you soon.

"Yours sincerely,  
"GEO. CLINTON,"

The following is the copy of a letter from Capt. Machin to the New York Council of Safety, preserved among his papers:

"*To the Honorable Committee of New Windsor:*

"GENTLEMEN—It will be needless for me to point out to you the necessity of some speedy obstructions being made in Hudson's river, against gun-boats, galleys and small crafts that will probably come up at the first opening of the spring, and prevent our making such necessary works as may preserve the good people on the banks of the river, from the revenge of a merciless enemy (*remember Kingston*), towards effecting which, much time has already elapsed and but little done, which drives me to the necessity of applying to the Honorable Committee on this occasion.

"We shall want a large quantity of timber for the Chain, which cannot be got up the river on account of the frost; and when the frost breaks up it will be too late for our business. I shall not think it consistent with my duty to distress any individual by cutting all the timber off one man's land, and thereby render a good farm of little value; and I cannot always be with men in the woods: useless destruction may be made by them unless over seen by somebody to prevent it. For this purpose I should be glad if the Honorable Committee will appoint a Wood Ranger to oversee the business, that the Master Carpenters may apply to him for such timber as they shall receive orders to get. It ought to be a person in disinterested circumstances, a man of honor, resolution and stability. A compliance with this will much forward the present business and oblige—gentlemen,

"You humble servant,  
THOS. MACHIN.

*New Windsor, 22d Feb., 1778.*

The following letter from Gen. James Clinton to Capt. Machin, is of a private rather than public character; and shows that

some men even at that early day, were rather above their business: or had conceived that sickly modern notion of its being dishonorable or disgraceful to labor. If it be *honorable* to disobey the commands of God, then indeed is it *dishonorable to work*—but if not—*not*.

“ *Little Britain, March, 4th, 1778.*

“ Dear Sir—I received your favor by Lieut. Strachan with a few lines from Col. Taylor inclosed, concerning a complaint that Capt. Young has made against Capt. Mills, (both of the Artificers,) but as Col. Taylor does not set forth what injury Capt. Mills has done Capt. Young, I can’t give you any advice about the matter.

“ I think your letter seems to confirm the charge against both of them; for what can stain an officer’s character more than not doing his duty? A captain of a company of artificers, if he does his duty, will have harder work than any of the privates, and I think you are answerable for their conduct, as you have the charge of the work; and if they don’t do their duty you must arrest them, if nothing else will do.

“ If they be gentlemen of such high spirits as to think it a scandal for them to work because they bear the title of captain, I think they might decide such disputes between themselves without troubling any officer with it. Inclosed you have Col. Taylor’s report, and if I must give my opinion of the matter, let me know what stories Capt. Mills has propagated against Capt. Young.

“ I am, Sir, Yours,

“ JAMES CLINTON, B. G.”

The following papers will show the spring of 1778, like that of the preceding year, to have been a very busy one in the Highlands of the Hudson:

“ Sir:—As Col. Laradiere has left us, I wish you, if you can be absent from New Windsor for a day to come to this port to-morrow or the day after, to advise about the proper method of fortifying this place.

“ From, Sir, your humble servant,

“ SAM’L H. PARSONS.

“ *West Point, 11th March, 1778.*”

“ *Monday afternoon, March 11th, 1778.*

“ My Dear Captain:—You will receive by the bearer some paper and all the white rope of the size mentioned we have. I have sent off Charley this minute to forward the cordage from Danbury, as well as from Fairfield, but can’t say what size there is at the latter [place], as it is sent by Mr. Shaw, of New London, at the request of Gen. Putnam, who never told me the sizes he ordered. I believe there are no more cables to be expected of Mr. Ives till he

gets more hemp—at least, I understood him so. In my letter to Gen. Putnam, I informed him, while he was in Connecticut, that all sizes would be wanted, and advised that the whole cargo should be bought.

“He referred the matter to Governor Trumbull, (and I imagine) the Governor to Mr. Shaw, who may, possibly, serve himself first. However, as I said before, Charles is gone to learn the true state of what is on the road, and forward it along. When he returns, which will be in two or three days, I expect, you shall hear further. I will wait on the general, and let you know his orders concerning the hands. Inclosed you have the general’s order for the men required.

“I am, Dear Captain,

“Yours in truth,

“J. HUGHES.

“P. S. You have also an order on Sheaf at Wappinger’s creek.”

“*Little Britain, March 20th, 1778.*

“Dear Sir:—I expected to have been to see you before now, but the riding was so bad I deferred it a little while, as I want to go to the West Point. I send my boy for the papers if they are come.

“I suppose you begin to ketch [catch] some fish this fine weather; if so, I would be glad you would send a few up here—and you will oblige,

Yours,

“JAMES CLINTON.”

The following paper, which is without date or signature, is in the hand writing of Gov. Clinton, and was filed by Capt. Machin as received from him March 20th, 1778 :

“Mr. Machin will write to Samuel Bronson, at Goshen, to know if he has any knowledge of a lead mine in the mountains, about nine miles off the river, of which he once spoke to Thos. Smith, Esq.

“Mr. Machin will also go to Wawarsink and see the mine there now working by one McDonald, and what prospect there is of working it to purpose. It is said there is a lead mine near Mamecotang [Mamakating, as now written], and one on this side the Shawangunk mountains, of which make inquiry—of the latter from Col. Palmer, the former from everybody. Mr. Wisner has the samples of them; get those from him——in those of Wasink in Dutchess and——.” [Several words at the close of this paper are rendered unintelligible.]

“Sir—if ’tis possible to spare any timber from the creek, I beg you to order it rafted immediately for this place, where we are in the greatest need of it; it ought not to be delayed a moment, our information being of a nature which requires immediate attention to compleating the batteries. [Probably in the vicinity of West Point.]

Your obedient serv’t,

“3d April, 1778.

SAML. H. PARSONS.”

The following is the copy of a letter from Capt. Machin to Gen. McDougal, which shows when the chain, which was stretched across the Hudson at West Point, was completed.

"Honored Sir—Lieut. Woodward who I told you was at Sterling iron works inspecting the chain, is now returned, and informs me that seventeen hundred feet of the Great Chain, which is more than equal to the breadth of the river at the place last fixed upon, is now ready for use. The capson [capstan] and docks are set up at the lower place; the mud blocks are launched and only wait for good weather to carry them down: four cannon, twelve and nine pounders are at the beach, also waiting for weather to go down: four more will be ready by Saturday; and if no unforeseen accident should appear, I shall be able to send down four cannon next week. If the weather should be favorable, I am in hopes we shall be able to take the chain down all fixed in about 6 days. Lieut. Woodward was ordered by Gen. Parsons to assist me at those works, and as he is a gentleman well skilled in mechanical powers, and a person of steady application, it will put me much out of the way to have him removed at this time. Should therefore be glad if you will continue him in the work, as somebody must be in his place, and to take an entire stranger at this time will be onerous and dangerous.

I am, dear sir,

Your humble servant,

THOS. MACHIN."

"The Honorable Maj. Gen. McDougal.

"April 20th, 1778."

"Poughkeepsie, 3d May, 1778.

"Dear Sir—I received your letter of yesterday and am happy to learn that the chain is across the river, and that you had the good fortune to accomplish it so expeditiously and so much to your satisfaction.

"I am informed that old Mr. Teabout, who lives (or did lately) at Van Deusens, near the Clove, has a phaeton that he will dispose of. If so, and it is a neat, good one, as I am told it is, I wish to buy it, provided it can be had at a reasonable price. A new one used to cost about £80. I would be willing to give something more now. Will you call and take a look at it—know the price, and if good and reasonable purchase it for me. The sooner you see it the better.

Yours, sincerely,

"Capt Machin.

GEO. CLINTON."

The following paper tells credibly for the skill and character of Capt. Machin :

"I hereby certify that about the middle of July, 1776, Capt. Machin, of the Artillery, came to Fort Montgomery, and by the



direction of His Excellency, Gen. Washington, was there employed in laying out and erecting works for the defence of that place, and for securing the pass to Anthony's Nose, until towards the latter part of August, when Gen. James Clinton took the command of that post. That in December following, Capt. Machin was employed in constructing chevaux-de-frize for obstructing the navigation of Hudson's river, opposite Pollopel's island; and that he continued in that business, sinking the same, making the necessary preparations for fixing the chain across the river at Fort Montgomery, and occasionally superintending the works at that place, until some time in June 1777, when Gen. Putnam took the command of the army in the neighborhood of the North river, and by his orders Capt. Machin was employed in constructing and making booms to draw across the river in front of the chain, till the reduction of that fort by the enemy, at which time he was badly wounded. And I have reason to believe, that upon his recovery he has been steady employed to this time in the necessary preparations for fixing the new chain across the river, completing one of the booms, the chevaux-de-frize, and raising the galley which was sunk on the enemy's advance up the river. In justice to Capt. Machin I am bound to add, that while he was under my command he discovered great diligence and industry in forwarding the different works committed to his care, and that in the execution of them he experienced an uncommon share of labor and fatigue, being often necessarily exposed to work in the water in very cold weather.

"Given under my hand at Poughkeepsie, this 17th of August, 1778,  
GEO. CLINTON."

The expenses of placing obstructions in the Hudson at the Highlands, were necessarily very great. An account current, in the hand writing of Capt. Machin, shews an indebtedness (before deducting assets,) of the "Quarter Master General, to Noble & Townsend, proprietors for the Sterling Iron Works," for some 135 tons of iron wrought into *booms, bolts, clips, chains, swivels, clevises, bands, &c.*, of *fourteen thousand eight hundred and sixty-nine dollars and eighty nine cents*; nearly all of which is accredited in the latter part of the year 1777. Another memorandum among the Machin papers, which is headed "A general abstract of several companies of Artificers employed in the works obstructing the navigation of Hudson's River, under the direction of Capt. Thomas Machin, Superintendent," gives the footing of the Payrolls for the labor of *twelve companies* of artificers, which amounts to *eleven thousand eighty-nine dollars and fifty cents*:



the longest term for which any of the Rolls was made being from Dec., 1776, to the first of June, 1777. After the enemy evacuated Fort Montgomery, and the Americans began to repair those works in the fall of 1777, a *dock, anchor and booms*, for obstructing the river at that place, were again constructed by Capt. Machin, as engineer, agreeably to the orders of Gen. Putnam, as his papers show.

The iron of which the mammoth chain used at West Point was manufactured, was wrought from ore in equal parts from Sterling and Long Mines, Orange county, N. Y. The links of this chain weighed from 100 to 150 pounds each. The whole chain weighed 186 tons.\* This chain was buoyed up in the middle of the river by several large spars, secured a few feet apart by strong timbers framed into them, upon which the chain rested. Every Fall it was drawn on shore by a windlass and the float taken out—both being replaced early in the Spring.—(*Capt. Eben Williams.*) The chain, as may be supposed, was properly fastened on shore at the ends. Several writers have promulgated an error by stating that a chain was stretched across the Hudson, at West Point, in the Autumn of 1777.

A chain of half the diameter of the one placed at West Point, in the Spring of 1778, was drawn across the river near Fort

\* Report of W. Horton, assistant Geologist in 1838, on the geology of Orange county.

In addition to the above, I glean the following facts from a letter from Peter Townsend, Esq., of New York, to Mr. Franklin Townsend, of Albany; the latter gentleman is a great-grandson of Peter Townsend, of Chester, the principal contractor for manufacturing the chain. The *Sterling Iron Works*, in Sterling, Orange county, are situated 25 miles back of West Point, and have been in extensive operation since about the year 1750. Col. Timothy Pickering, who was entrusted with the responsibility of making the chain, accompanied by Capt. Machin, arrived at the house of Mr. Townsend, in Chester, late on a Saturday evening, early in March, 1778. The latter gentleman readily agreed to construct the chain, and such was their zeal in the popular cause, that the parties left Chester at midnight, in a violent snow-storm, and rode to the Sterling works, a distance of *fourteen miles*, to commence the job. At daylight on Sunday morning, Mr. Townsend had all his forges in operation, and the chain was begun. The work went on without interruption, the herculean task was finished, and the chain, carted in sections by New England teamsters, delivered at West Point in *six weeks*.

Montgomery, in Nov., 1776. This chain, which, agreeably to the letter of Peter Townsend, already quoted, was made at the *Ringwood Iron Works*, New Jersey, and composed of cold short iron, was broken by the enemy in the fall of 1778. The West Point chain crossed the river just above the Point to Constitution Island, a distance of some 1500 feet. It was guarded by a strong battery, erected at each end to command its approach, and was never molested by the enemy.



WEST POINT, AS SEEN IN 1780.

*Explanation.*—A, a battery on Constitution island. B, the great chain suspended across the Hudson. C, Fort Clinton on the West Point. The latter, which occupied nearly the present site of the *military academy*, commanded a southern approach to the Point.

The following letter, found in the correspondence of the *Provincial Congress of N. Y.*, shows the result of the survey, made agreeably to the request of Gen. Schuyler, in the Autumn of 1776 :

“Nov. 22, 1776.

“In consequence of a letter received by us, the subscribers, members of the secret committee, from the Committee of Safety, dated the — day of November instant, when we were at Fort Montgomery fixing the chain across the river, enclosing an extract from Gen. Schuyler, requesting the Convention to have the river sounded in different places in the Highlands, we have sounded the

river, beginning between Verplanck's and Stoney Point, thence northward through the Highlands to Pollopel's Island, and find no part of the river in that distance less than *eighty feet deep* in the main channel, till within a short distance of the island.

"From the island to the western shore, we found, by measurement, the distance to be fifty three chains; the channel near the middle of the river at that place, is about eighty chains broad, and about *fifty feet deep*; from the channel the water shoals gradually on both sides to the flats, which are about eight or ten chains broad, reckoning both sides. This above described place is the only one, in our opinion, that it is possible for an obstruction to be made by docking, effectually to impede the navigation of Hudson's river, at any place above the south part of the Highlands.

"HENRY WISNER.

"GILBERT LIVINGSTON."

In accordance with the survey made as above certified, *chevauxdefrize* were sunk in the river between Pollopel's Island and the west bank of the river, under the direction of Capt. Machin. The chain which guarded the river near Fort Montgomery, parted twice soon after it was fastened. The following certifies to the accident :

"Fort Montgomery, Dec. 9, 1776.

"These are to certify that the chain that has been stretched across the North river at this fort, has been broke twice; the first, a swivel broke, which came from Ticonderoga, which was not welded sound; the second time, a clevin broke, which was made at Poughkeepsie, in a solid part of the chain, and no flaw to be seen in any part of said chain. Which we do certify at the request of Messrs. Odle and Vanduzer.

"JAMES CLINTON, B. GEN.

"ABM. SWARTWOUT, CAPT.

"JAS. ROSECRANS, CAPT.

"DANL. LAWRENCE, LIEUT."

This chain, which was stretched across the river from Fort Montgomery to Anthony's Nose, was 1800 feet long. The State Committee authorized Capt. Machin to alter it or change its place. Below the chain he placed a boom. Of those works the historian Botta thus observes: "*They were remarkable for their perfection, and had been executed with equal industry and difficulty.*"

Several writers have stated that skillful engineers were sent out by the King of France to explore the Highlands of the Hud-

son, and locate suitable defences; that they superintended the erection of forts and obstructions along the river, *for which they were never paid. This is all untrue.* The Continental Congress recommended a survey of the Hudson, and the erection of several batteries in the Highlands, as early as May, 1775. In June following, Col. James Clinton and Christopher Tappen were appointed by the Provincial Congress of New York to designate sites, and having reported to that body, it resolved to build them. Commissioners to superintend the construction of the works were selected from the delegates, of which number John Berrien acted as commissary. Bernard Romans, then a pensioner from the British crown, was employed to act as engineer, and entered upon the duties in the latter part of September. Fort Constitution, situated on "Martelair's Rock Island," afterwards called Constitution Island, in the east side of the Hudson, just above the West Point, was then commenced. Some difficulty having arisen between the engineer and commissioners, a special committee visited the works in December, to reconcile the existing differences. They censured the course of the engineer in not consulting the commissioners—disapproved of the plan adopted, as too expensive for the benefits likely to accrue, and recommended the erection of defensive works at Poplopins' kill. Romans continued at Fort Constitution until some time in the winter.

In January, 1776, the erection of a battery, to mount 30 guns, was commenced by Thomas Grennell, one of the commissioners, on an eminence 714 yards east of West Point, to command the stretch of the river above and below it, about which time a battery, to mount eighteen heavy cannon, was begun on a gravel hill, 500 yards eastward of Fort Constitution, and 1700 north of the other battery, intended to cover the fort and scour the West Point. In Feb., 1776, Capt. Smith, Gen. Lee's engineer, succeeded Mr. Romans, and began the construction of Fort Montgomery, on the north chop of Poplopin's kill, 6 miles distant from Fort Constitution: and soon after, Fort Clinton, on the south side of the kill was commenced.

Application having been made in June, 1776, to Gen. Wash-



ington for an engineer, by the Provincial Congress of New York, he agreed to send them one "who would take the whole direction of the works in the Highlands;" whereupon the commissioners were discharged from further service. The engineer sent, as has been shown, was Capt. Thomas Machin.

The correspondence inserted will serve to show the reader, to some extent, the duties performed by Capt. Machin in the Highlands. Under his direction, forts Montgomery and Clinton were completed, and several other forts and batteries along the river planned and erected, and the navigation obstructed. After the enemy destroyed forts Montgomery and Clinton, the latter was never rebuilt, but a strong fortress was placed on West Point, (the present site of the military academy,) and given the same name. Above, and commanding this fort, stood Fort Putnam, the ruins of which are still visible, and on an eminence, half a mile south-west of [the former, was a strong reboubt called Fort Willis.

Early in Jan., 1778, John Sloss Hobart, Henry Wisner, John Hathorn, and Zeph. Platt, delegated for that purpose by the State Congress, Generals Putnam and George Clinton, the Lieut. Col. of Engineers, Capt. Machin, and several other military gentlemen, met at Poughkeepsie, to consult about fortifying and obstructing the Hudson; and the works located at and near West Point, were placed there in accordance with their views. Generals Schuyler, Lee, Sterling, and a few other officers, were also consulted on some occasions, about fortifying the river.

The following letter from Doct. Freeman, shows Capt. Machin still engaged in the valley of the Hudson.

*"Sandwich, August 10th. 1778.*

"Dear Sir—Your favor by Mr. Williams I received, also one before; am very glad to hear you are well, and employing your ingenuity and abilities in such a glorious cause, and with such promising aspects.

"Your chest of books and instruments are safe here, and ready to be delivered to your order at any time, and should be very happy to see you here yourself, which hope shall have opportunity for ere long. Mr. Williams can tell you all y<sup>e</sup> news from this quarter, to whom I refer you. He manifests a great regard for you, and



any favor you can show him will meet my sincerest gratitude, as he is my neighbor and friend. Your letters give me much satisfaction, and would have been answered before, but for want of opportunity. As often as you write me you will greatly oblige your affectionate friend and humble serv't.

"N. FREEMAN."

"Mrs. Freeman sends her compliments, &c.."

"P. S. Our report respecting the channel was seasonably made and in favor of it, but nothing done."

Lieut. Woodward, mentioned by Capt. Machin as being his assistant at West Point, became after they separated his constant correspondent. The following is one of his letters.

"White Plains, 5th Sept. 1778,

"Dear Captain—This is the fourth time of my writing without hearing or receiving from you. I believe you to be buried by this. Give me joy; I am ordered to join Capt. Walker, who is annexed to Gen. Huntington's Brigade near the Artillery Park. We live exceedingly happy on rum, beef and bread. The board of officers are sitting to settle the rank of the regiment, which makes me sorry you are not present. I waited on Gen. Parsons yesterday, who expressed surprise that you had not got down yet. Your company does duty with Capt. Wool's in Gen. Clinton's Brigade. Your lads are all well and want to see you. Our Captains are all high for rank. I hope you will not forget my *foiles*, but send them down by the first opportunity. I should be very glad if you can send down my ward, which is in my chest at Mr. Fraser's. Give my tender regards to Mrs. Logan and the Maj. if returned—also to all your friends as well as mine.

"Your friend,

"PETER WOODWARD."

In a bill of expenses for extra services, Capt. Machin rendered in 1778, are the following items: "Exploring Hudson's River from the 1st day of Jan. with 7 men 6 days, £6 10 0; expenses of getting down the chain logs with 40 men 4 days, £6 0 0; expenses in raising the Lady Washington galley at Kingston creek 20 days, £9 10 6." This vessel was purposely sunk on the enemy's approach the preceding October.

In the years 1777 and 1778, Capt. Machin paid out, independent of sums already named, as appears from the vouchers among his papers, between *thirty and forty thousand dollars*—mostly for obstructing the River. The usual price paid carpenters per day was \$0.93 $\frac{3}{4}$ —foreman \$1.50: blacksmiths from \$1.37 $\frac{1}{2}$  to \$1.50

—foreman \$2: artificers same as blacksmiths: shipwrights \$1. 50—foreman \$2.12½, and captains of companies \$3. “Joshua Marriner, super-instructor of the artificers, employed in making carriages and stocking cannon,” had \$2 per day. Men employed in the summer of 1778, in *burning coal* to be used in preparing obstructions for the River, received 7s. 6d, or 93¾ cents per day. The burning of coal from January to August of that year amounted, as appears by vouchers, to *two hundred and forty dollars*. A few pounds of sole-leather used in making pump boxes to aid in raising sunken vessels, was paid for at the rate of \$1.25 per pound.

As appears from Capt. Machin’s papers, he acted in the latter part of 1776, and early part of 1777, under the direction of Gov. Clinton: in the latter part of that year and early part of 1778, under that of Maj. Gen. Putnam; and in the summer and autumn of 1778, under that of Brig. Gen. Parsons.

To secure the passage of the Hudson through the Highlands against the enemy’s shipping, was considered of most vital importance; and its principal direction being assigned to Capt. Machin, tells credibly for his skill and integrity.

In the spring of 1779, as a part of the meditated invasion of the Indian country in New-York by Gen. Sullivan; Col. Van Schaick marched to Onondaga, as I have shown, to destroy the possessions of that nation. The following journal of that transaction is on file among Capt. Machin’s papers.

“Early on Monday morning, 19th of April, 1779—Marched from Fort Schuyler with a detachment of troops consisting of 558 men including officers; and after marching [putting] eight days provision into bateaus which had been conveyed over the carrying place in the night, and leaving a sufficient number of soldiers to assist the bateaumen to get the boats down Wood Creek, with five officers to hurry them on—the remainder of the troops marched to the old scow place, twenty-two miles by land, but much more by water: the troops arrived by 3 o’clock P. M., but the boats did not all arrive until 10 o’clock, having been much obstructed by trees which had fallen across the Creek. As soon as the boats arrived the whole of the troops embarked, and on entering the Onidahogo [Oneida Lake], was much impeded by a cold head wind. Made one halt in the night for the rearmost boats to come up, and then

proceeded to Posser's Bay, where we arrived at 8 o'clock in the morning of the 20th, to wait again for the coming up of the boats, when we continued with as much expedition as possible to the Onondaga Landing opposite the old fort, and arrived there at 3 o'clock P. M. from whence, after leaving the boats with proper guard, we marched eight or nine miles on our way to the Onondaga settlement and lay on our arms all night without fire, not being able to continue our marching—dark—the night cold. Very early on the 21st proceeded on to the old Salt Lake, and at 9 o'clock A. M. forded an arm of that Lake two hundred yards over and four feet deep a considerable part of the way: pushed on to the Onondaga Creek, where Capt. Graham with his company of Light Infantry took an Onondaga warrior prisoner, which was the first Indian we had discovered. Ordered Capt. Graham to endeavor to surround the first Onondaga settlements which were about two miles off, and hastening on the troops by companies as fast as he crost the Creek upon a log—the Creek not being fordable. I soon arrived with the whole detachment at the principal Castle, but was before apprised of their having discovered our advanced parties while they were taking some prisoners, upon which I ordered different routes to be taken by several different detachments in order to surround as many of their settlements as possible at the same time, which extended eight miles in length, with some scattered habitations lying back of the coasts and on the opposite side of the Creek; but notwithstanding, entered their first settlement in the most secret manner and quite undiscovered by them. They soon received the alarm throughout the whole and fled to the woods, but without being able to carry off any thing with them. We took thirty-three Indians and one white prisoner, and killed twelve Indians—the whole of their settlement consisting of about fifty houses, with a quantity of corn and every other kind of stock we found were killed [destroyed]—about one hundred guns, some of which were rifles, were among the plunder, the whole of which, after the men had loaded [themselves] with as much as they could carry, was destroyed, with a considerable quantity of ammunition: one swivel taken at the Council House had the trunnions broken off and otherwise damaged: in fine, the destruction of all their settlements was compleat, after which we begun our march back recrossing the Creek, and forded the arm of the Lake alongside of which we encamped on very good ground; having been once interrupted in our return by a small party of Indians who fired at us from the opposite side of the Creek, but were soon beat off by Lient. Evans' riflemen, with the loss of one killed on the part of the enemy and none on ours; unfair weather all this day. 22d marched down to the landing; found bateaus in good order; re-embarked and rowed down to the Seven Miles' Island where we encamped—fair weather. 23d, crossed the Lake and landed two miles up Wood Creek; at two o'clock left two companies to guard and assist the bateaumen in getting up the boats—marched eight miles and encamped alongside Feals Creek—fair weather. Sa-

turday 24th, small shower of rain on our march to the Fort, where we arrived at 12 o'clock; having been out five days and a half, the whole distance of going out and returning being one hundred eighty miles, not having lost a single man."

In May, 1779, Capt. Machin was engaged in taking a water-level between Albany and Schenectada, with a view of supplying the former city with water. He submitted a plan for this object to the city corporation, with drawings to show the manner in which an aqueduct and reservoir should be constructed. Agreeable to his table of levels, a mark on a post at the *watering trough at Bratt's half-way house*, was 277 feet  $3\frac{5}{16}$  inches above the *city hall wharf*. The first mile stone out of Albany was 211 feet  $5\frac{2}{10}$  inches below the mark at Bratt's.

Capt. Machin, as engineer, was in Sullivan's expedition to the Genesee valley in 1779. At Canajoharie he received one, and at Otsego lake the other, of the following letters from Dr. Young.

"Dear Sir—Yours of the 21st by Doct. Maus came safe to hand this forenoon, and gives me the greatest pleasure to find things are conducted with spirit. The fortunate capture and immediate execution of Lieut. Hare, will, I hope, produce good consequences, as it will convince the enemy, that we have spirit enough to retaliate, and chastise them for their savage barbarity. The surgeon of Hazen's regiment writes Doct. Stringer, that Hazen, with about half the regiment are within 40 miles of St. Johns, that many Canadians had joined him, that the Canadians in bulk (a few of the lowest of the people excepted,) are strongly attached to the cause of the Americans. That two French frigates have lately made their appearance in St. Paul's Bay, near Isle a Caudre, and that no English vessels had arrived this season, which causes some to imagine that the French have a fleet in the river. The news from Charles Town, I think may be depended upon—as soon as it comes officially from Congress, I will transmit it to you by the first opportunity. Continue to write, and expect the most material occurrences in our quarter in return. Two members of Congress, viz: Doct. Weatherspoon and Col. Atlee passed thro' this place to the state of Vermont, on Monday; probably to deliver to them [Vermonters] the sentiments of Congress concerning their separation from this state.

"Please to present my compliments to the gentlemen of the Artillery Corps, and believe me to be with sincere esteem,

Your Friend and Serv't,

JOS. YOUNG."

"Albany, June 22d, 1779."



"Dear Sir—I acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 25th inst., and am happy to hear that every thing has succeeded so well hitherto—hope your may glide on in the same current of good fortune, till the end of a glorious campaign, and return to Albany crown'd with unfading laurels. Another acct. of our success over the enemy at Charles Town is arrived, the particulars of which will be transmitted to the Gen. by Capt. Lush.

"A Pennsylvania paper is in town, containing a speech of one Gordon, in the house of Commons, equal in freedom and smartness to Junius's letters—could I procure it, I would inclose it. Our little fleet in many late instances has demurr'd to the claim of the haughty Britons, to the universal empire of the sea; and have convinced some of them that their claim was not well founded, by a most powerful train of well directed arguments, leaving them high and dry at anchor in the state house at Philadelphia. One of the British litigants never put in a plea, but suffered judgment to pass against him by default.

"D'Estaing's and the English fleets, are both out at sea of nearly equal numbers, and in sight of each other; by which circumstance it is conjectured there will be much chopping of logic, and many learned and forcible arguments made use of pro and contra, when the pleas are closed, 'tis said a jury of surgeons meet to decide upon the merits of the cause in question: when I receive their verdict I will transmit it to you—as it may have a tendency to elucidate some points, that are at present under the consideration of the literati, both at St. James' and Philadelphia. Till which I am

Your friend and servant,

JO. YOUNG."

"*Albany, June 27th, 1779.*"

The following extracts are from a letter to Capt. Machin while at Otsego lake:

"The southern news still remains without a confirmation from Congress." [The southern news alluded to by Young and Rutgers, was no doubt the abortive attempt of the British army under Provost, to capture the city of Charleston, S. C., about the middle of May.] "Though there is not the least doubt of its being true. The enemy are yet at King's Ferry. A few days since it was thought they were coming up; as some heavy cannons are arrived from the eastward, I think we shall be in tolerable good order to receive them, if ever they get in earnest about it.

"Gen. Washington is at New Windsor and quarters at Col-Ellison's. The park of artillery I hear is at Chester, and the infantry scattered in the defiles of the mountains near the garrison. The inhospitable mountains not suffering the army to remain in their usual compact order.

Your most obedient, &c.,

HENRY RUTGERS, Jun."

While under Sullivan, Capt. Machin executed a handsome map



of Cayuga and Seneca lakes, with the distances on the way out at intervals of one mile each, from Tioga Point to the end of the route, which terminated nearly sixty miles west of the outlet of Seneca lake; and back to the starting place.\*

While Sullivan's army was in the Indian country an incident occurred to which I have before alluded, some additional particulars of which may prove interesting. An advance party which was opening a road for the army and protected by a strong covering party, were attacked by Kayingwaurto, a Seneca chief, with eighty-two warriors. The guard instantly ran to rescue the advance, and a skirmish ensued in which that chief and two of his followers were slain. The enemy, from the noise and impetuosity of the attack, supposing the whole army was upon them, fled precipitately, leaving their packs, blankets, kettles, &c. Upon the person of this Seneca chief was found a pocket book which contained two papers of interest. One was a certificate of which the following is very nearly a copy.

"This may certify that Kayingwaurto, the Sanake Chief, has been on an expedition to Fort Stanwix and has taken two scalps,† one from an officer and a corporal that were a gunning near the fort, for which I promise to pay at sight, *ten dollars for each scalp.*

"Given under my hand at Buck's Island.

"JOHN BUTLER, *Col. and Supt.*

"*of the Six Nations and the*

"*Allies of his Majesty.*"

\* The route pursued as marked upon this map crosses Spring creek near the Tioga, into which it empties, twenty-one miles from its mouth, and passing up the west side of that stream a few miles, struck the head waters of Seneca creek. The route continued some five or six miles along the west side of the creek, then crossing, was continued upon its eastern side with one exception at an angle, to "French Catharine's Town," situated in a bend of the creek three or four miles from its mouth. From Catharine's Town the route led along the east side of Seneca lake crossing at a little distance from the lake, twenty-five small streams which ran into it along its eastern shore. Eleven miles from the outlet, probably in the present town of Ovid, they destroyed an Indian village situated on the north side of a small creek, and called on Machin's map "Candia." Crossing the outlet of Seneca lake, the army proceeded westward, and a few miles from the lake destroyed "Kanadesago," the largest of the Seneca towns.

† Those scalps were obtained by this Indian in the following manner. In the summer of 1777, Capt. Greg left Fort Stanwix, or as then called Fort

It having been asserted in Congress, after the war, that there was no evidence of the fact that the British government authorized the payment of money for scalps, the certificate of Col. Butler to Kayingwaurto, known by one of the New York members to be in Machin's possession, was sent for, and was accordingly forwarded to the seat of government: the evidence it contained was satisfactory that Britain did buy American scalps, and thus the controversy ended.

The other paper found in the pocket book of the Seneca Chief, filed "Convention of Whyoming," is an original manuscript under the hand and seal of John Butler and Kayingwaurto, the seal of the latter being the figured emblem of a *turtle*.

"Westmoreland, 5th July, 1778.

"This doth hereby certify that Lieutenant Elisha Scovell has surrendered his garrison with all his people to government, and to remain as neutral during this present contest with Great Britain and America; in consideration of which, Col. John Butler, Superintendent of the Six Nations of Indians, their allies, &c.,

Schuyler, one afternoon with a corporal also of that garrison, to shoot pigeons. Toward night the fowlers, when about to return to the fort, were fired upon by concealed foes. Greg, after receiving some blows on the head with a tomahawk, was scalped, an Indian drawing off the bloody trophy with his teeth. Securing also the scalp of the corporal who had been killed outright, the Indians withdrew. Partially recovering, Capt. Greg thought if he could pillow his aching head upon the body of his fallen comrade, it would be a source of relief and ease a dying hour; and after several attempts he succeeded in gaining that position: but to his great annoyance a little dog kept up a continual yelping and whining. The bleeding captain was too sick at heart to bear patiently the evidence of his dog's sorrow, and addressed him as though a rational being. Said he, "If you wish so much to help me, go and call some one to my relief!" To the surprise of the sufferer, at the close of the command the dog ran off to three men belonging to the garrison, who were fishing nearly a mile distant, and by his pitiful moans attracted their notice. They doubtless knew whose dog it was, and as his appearance was unusual, they agreed to follow him and have the mystery solved. After following the dog for some distance, the sun being down and the forest dangerous, they were about to return, perceiving which the little messenger increased his cries, and seizing their clothes in his teeth endeavored to pull them toward the spot where his master lay. The fishermen now resolved to follow the dog at all hazards, and he soon led them to the scene of blood. The corporal was hastily buried, and the captain carried to the fort where his wounds were dressed with care—he was restored to health and narrated the above particulars to his friends.—*Dr. Dwight.*

with Kayingwaurto, the chief of the Sanake [Seneca] Nation and the other chief warriors of the Six Nations, do promise, that they shall live in the quiet possession of their places with their families, and shall be daily protected from insult as far as lies in their power, and provided that they should be taken it is our desire that they may forthwith be released.

"[L. s.]

JOHN BUTLER.

"[Device of Turtle.]

KAYINGWAURTO."

The map made by Capt. Machin also shows that on the return of Sullivan's army from the Genesee country, it proceeded along the north side of the outlet of Seneca Lake, destroying about equi-distant from Seneca and Cayuga Lakes, an Indian village called Scawyace. Crossing the outlet of Cayuga the route was continued up the eastern side of the lake. "East Cayuga or Old Town; Cayuga Castle; Upper Cayuga; and Chonodote," are places noted on the map on this part of the route. Fourteen small streams are located as having been crossed along the eastern shore of the lake, all running into it before reaching its principal tributary. Passing a few miles up the latter stream the army crossed it, and continuing a south-westerly course came into the road by which it had gone out, about five miles above the mouth of Spring Creek. The following table of distances, made at the time, is preserved with the map.

*"Distance of Places from Eastown to Chenessee, [Genesee] Castle, taken in 1779, by actual survey.*

Names of Places.	Miles.	Total.
From Eastown to Weoming,.....	65	65
To Lachawaneck Creek,.....	10	75
" Quailuternunk, .....	7	82
" Tunkhannunk Creek, .....	11	93
" Meshohing Creek, .....	9	102
" Vanderlip's Plantation,.....	5	107
" Wealusking Town, .....	8	115
" Wessawkin or Pine Creek,.....	14½	129½
" Tioga, .....	15½	145
" Chemung, .....	12	157
" Newtown, .....	8½	165½
" French Catharine's Town, .....	18	183½
" Candia or Apple Town, .....	27½	211
" The outlet of the Seneca Lake, .....	11½	222½
" Kanadesago or the Seneca Castle, .....	3½	226
" Kanandaque, .....	15½	241½
" Haunyauya, .....	13½	255
" Adjusta, .....	12½	267½
" Cossauwauloughby, .....	7	274½
" Chenessee Castle, .....	5½	230

*"Distance from Kanadesago round the Cayuga Lake to Newtown—Fort Reed.*

Names of Places.	Miles.	Total.
From Kanadesago to Scawyace, .....	8½	8½
To across the outlet of the Cayuga, .....	8½	17
" The Cayuga Castle, .....	10	27
" Chonodote, a town remarkable for a number of peach trees, .....	3½	30½
" The upper end of Cayuga Lake, .....	23	53½
" [A town on the map but not named,] .....	5	58½
And from thence to Newtown, otherwise Fort Reed, .....	27½	86

The following letter from Gen. Clinton again found Capt. Machin at New Windsor.

*"Little Britain, Oct. 31st, 1779.*

*"Dr. Sir*—I received your favor and am much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken: the key of my case is in the major's chest, I believe, so that you have done all for me I expected or could wish you to do.

"I left East Town last Wednesday at the time the army set off for Warwick, and had Gen. Sullivan's permission to go on before the brigade to visit my family: when I got to Sussex Court House there arrived an express from head quarters for our army to march from East Town to Pumputown, but as our army was then at Log Gaol, within ten miles of Sussex Court House, I don't know what route they have taken, but it was thought they would march from thence to Hacket's Town and so to Pumputown.

"As I consider myself on furlough I can't pretend to order you for the above reason, but would advise you to send the baggage agreeable to Lt. Hervey's orders. I expect to go to head quarters on Tuesday next, where I expect to receive orders what to do with the troops of the brigade, &c. at New Windsor. In the mean time let the commanding officer know that its my orders that he hold them in readiness to march on the shortest notice.

"I am sir, yours, &c.,

**"JAMES CLINTON."**

"P. S. I expect to be at N. Windsor on Tuesday as I go to head quarters, when perhaps I will see you."

The following extract of a letter from Lieut. Woodward to Capt. Machin, dated "Newburgh, Nov. 20, 1779," shows Cupid recruiting for *his* service in the American army.

"We have had the most surprising accident happen that ever you could hear of, which is, that a sergeant of our company has run away with a young lady of this place by the name of Fauster, who is the first fortune in town, and she is the only heiress."



I have before adverted to the suffering of the American army in the winter of 1779 and 80; the following letters from Henry Rutgers, Esq., and Dr. Young, allude to the same subject:

“ *New Windsor, Jan. 18, 1780.*

“ *My Dear Sir*—I was this moment favored with your letter of the 14th inst., and with pleasure read its contents, as your troubles were beginning to cease by the necessities of life coming in again. By this time, I make no doubt, you have experienced every vicissitude of fortune in almost every stage of your life—hunger, cold and every inconveniency attending a soldier, you are no stranger to. It is needless for me to moralize or philosophize on the subject, to encourage your perseverance, as such arguments are familiar to you. One thing I would only beg leave to mention, which is, that this spring, in my opinion, the war will either cease or be transferred to some other part of the world; as I conceive it impossible for Britain to continue it at so great an odds. In either case I shall be content, as my country will then be enabled to recruit from the depredations committed upon her by the cruelty and tyranny of Britain.

I was just now entertained with an agreeable view: 2 or 300 cattle passing to Windsor, on the ice, for head quarters. If entertaining to me, what will you feel upon their arrival! I flatter myself that I anticipate the pleasure. Want of time and paper prevent my saying more, than that I wish you every succession of happiness with the blessings of the year. Mr. and Mrs. Bedlow, with Miss Caty and Polly, join me in their professions for the same, and believe me, dear Sir, that I remain

Your friend and very humble servant,

“HENRY RUTGERS.

“ *To Capt. Machin, at Morris Town.*”

“ *Dear Sir*—I received your kind epistle of the 14th Instant, and most feelingly sympathize with the noble boys who have suffered such uncommon hardships without complaining. If this is not patriotism, I will thank the British Despot that will inform me what it is. However, I rejoice that you have obtained a supply of provisions, and hope you will not experience such another trial.

“ We have nothing new in this quarter worth your notice; but hope, if Lord Sterling succeeds in his enterprise against Staten Island, you will embrace the first opportunity to inform me of the particulars, together with what other news you may hear from any other quarter.\* I hope soon to have the pleasure of seeing you in

\* The enterprise to Staten Island proved a failure; the American troops not arriving in sight of the British garrison they were sent to surprise until after day-light. Nearly a sleigh load of black soldiers, sent on the expedition, were frozen to death. Col. Angel's regiment of blacks, although said to have been as brave, could not endure the cold as well as white soldiers.—*James Williamson.*



Albany, when I will show you with what dexterity and pleasure I ride my Electrical Hobby Horse. Till then I am

Your sincere friend and humble servant,

“JO. YOUNG.

“P. S. My kindest compl'ts to all my friends in camp.

“*Albany, Jan'y, 24, 1780.*”

The following letter, from Lieut. Patterson to Capt. Machin, is inserted because of its historic interest :

“*Fort Pitt, July 3d, 1780.*

“*Dear Sir*—Nothing can contribute more to my happiness, in this distant and remote part of the world, than a correspondence with a gentleman of your natural and acquired abilities, upon the genuine principles of true and disinterested friendship, and nothing prevented me from writing sooner but a diffidence of my own abilities.

“As the bearer is waiting I have only time to inform you of our safe arrival at this post the twenty-fourth ult., very much fatigued, after a long and tedious march, of near five weeks, from Carlisle. I begin to find we shall not be so fond of the place as we imagined before we arrived, for there is nothing but repeated scenes and ideas, and such a sameness in every day's transactions, that will make time glide on a very slow pace.

“The Fort is very pleasantly situated in the forks at the conflux of the Mahangahela and Alleghana Rivers. It is very strong, but the walls and barracks are much decayed, and the best buildings were destroyed by the English when they evacuated the garrison. The town, which consists of about fifty log-houses and cabins, is situated on the bank of the Mahangahela, about two or three hundred yards from the Fort. There is [are] about fifty Dalaware Indians and a number of Squaws at this place, which [who] brought in a quantity of skins and furs, but it is hard for the officers to get enough to supply their wants, there is such a number of old traders that can talk Indian, and they are much fonder to exchange them for shirts, blankets, &c., than any other way. I am informed there are continually a number of them loitering about town to draw provision.

“I shall inform you more particularly of the place the next opportunity, by which time I will be better acquainted, and therefore in my power to do it with more exactness. Please to write every opportunity and inform me of your transactions at Head Quarters, for we have scarcely ever any news here that can be depended on. I am, with the greatest—

“Your most obedient and very humble servant,

“EZRA PATTERSON.”

“Present my best compliments to Mr. Woodard and the Gent. of my acquaintance.”

The following copy of a letter of instruction to the committee

of conference with the Legislature of New York, shows the poverty of the army in a pecuniary view :

“ *Camp Steenrapin, Sept. 6th, 1780.*

“ *Gentle’n.*—We have chosen you our Committee to wait upon the Legislature of the State of New York, for the important purposes of representing to that body the unhappy and distressing situation of the troops under our command, and *their* immediate care and direction, and of enforcing a speedy execution of the resolves of Congress relative to the supplies necessary for the comfortable subsistence of the army; and as well to ascertain and liquidate the loss sustained by the army by the depreciation of the currency, as to obtain proper security for the payment thereof. These, Gentle’n., are the essential objects to which we would call your attention. The real depreciation upon the monies received and expended by the Army you are well acquainted with, and the most eligible mode to ascertain it, we conceive, will be by taking a comparative view of the prices of articles most needed in camp, beginning at the first establishment of our present pay, and thence computing at different periods the advance upon such articles. You will please to have in view, that the pay of the troops has been very irregular, and that they have seldom been with less than three months’ pay in arrears, and often with more; especially in the present year, the pay for which from the 1st of January is still due, the depreciation on which can be computed at nothing less than the real value of the money on the first of August. With respect to the payment of such depreciated money as may be due us, we think that cash, or nothing less than a real security or Transfer of lands, will by any means answer the good intentions of the state, or relieve us. Certificates, or notes for payment, we find by long experience, like other paper credit, is subject to the ebbs and flows of the times: we have had melancholly instances of this in the Eastern States, where the notes given to the troops have been sold at the most enormous discount, and the distresses of their army, which the Legislatures had in view to relieve, have by no means been removed. Good landed interest is secure from these failures, and is the security we wish to receive; it is such, if conveyed to us firmly and *bone-fide*, will always form a capital upon which we can draw without any discount. When we say landed interest, we mean, Gentlemen, improved estates, such as have a real and immediate value, of which the state to which we belong have an abundance, by the attainder of many of its inhabitants who have withdrawn themselves from its allegiance. In settling the value of these lands, it will be necessary for you to pay particular attention to the mode to be adopted. We would recommend that three different men may be appointed under oath for that purpose, and that we may have a voice in nominating as well the persons to value, as the lands to be appraised. As Congress has, by a resolve of the 24th of August last, recommended to the

different states to make provision for the widows and orphans of Officers who have died or may die in the service, we request your attention thereto, and that the provision therein recommended, or some other, may be extended to the widows and orphans of the Non-Commissioned Officers and soldiers in the like circumstances.

"We beg gentlemen that you will proceed as soon as possible upon the important business to which you are delegated, and we have the utmost confidence in your zeal and abilities to serve us, we would wish you to consider these instructions more or less absolute as you shall find circumstances require, and to do whatever else may be necessary for our interest, tho' not particularly mentioned herein. We wish you, gentlemen, a pleasant journey and happy success in your endeavors to serve us.

We are, gentlemen,  
Yours &c."

"To Lieut. Col. Willet,  
Major Fish,  
Capt. Machin."

I regret that I am not able to give the names of the officers under whom the committee, on the part of the army acted. The following letter from Lieut. Bradford directed to Capt. Machin at the assembly, Poughkeepsie, or Esopus, affords but another evidence of the sorry condition of the army in the fall of 1780, and the importance of the committee's visit to the legislature.

*"Head Quarters, 17th September, 1780.*

"Dear Sir—This being the first conveyance since you left us, you will permit me to enquire after your welfare, and to inform you of that of your friends and acquaintances in this quarter: Capt. Mott and Lieut. Ashton excepted, the former is very ill, and the latter much indisposed—since your departure we remain in the same position, no alterations in the army in general, and but few in our regiment. One circumstance which probably will not be unexpected, [is,] that of the desertion of Mr. Gable; he left Capt. Moodie on the 14th inst., since which we have heard nothing from him. The night before he went off, Lieut. Brewster lost every article out of his tent, the shirt on his back excepted, and at the smallest computation his loss must amount to £4000. Mr. Brewster's situation is truly chagrining; and from some circumstances appearing against Mr. Gable, that of his leaving his blanket and knapsack, and stealing two empty ones before he went off, gives every suspicion of his being the thief. In consequence of those circumstances appearing against the deserter, Mr. Brewster with two mattsos set out to Bloominggrove in expectation of coming up with the scoundrel. Corporal McBride and James Whitmore set out for Morris Town, in some hopes of meeting with him there. I sincerely wish Mr. Brewster every success, tho' I much despair of his meeting with the fellow.

"The situation of our army since you left us has been truly distressing. *Six days* out of fifteen have the principal part of our army been without provisions, tho' it has not been the case with us; but we have had some small share in the disappointment: these circumstances are much against us, tho' it would not be thought so much of, was it not for a d—d rascally resolve of Congress; who say that if any officer or soldier does not draw the rations on the day they are due, they shall not receive them afterwards; from those circumstances we may naturally suppose, if we judge from the present, we shall be starved one-third of the time. From this, and almost every other proceeding of that August Body, they seem as tho' they had positively determined to injure the most Virtuous Body in the United States; (that of the army,) permit me, Dear Sir, to say things with us appear very gloomy. It is confidently asserted that the state of Connecticut has refused to supply the army with any more *beef*, in consequence of which one of the general's aids, Capt. Humphery set off with letters to Governor Trumbull to know (as we suppose) the reasons.

"Of the accounts from the southward, the newspapers will give you more particular information than I can. We have it confidently reported, and indeed generally believed, that Admiral Rodney, with thirteen sail of the line are arrived at New York from the West Indies, and the French fleet, consisting of eighteen sail of the line, are arrived at Rhode Island; should this be the case, we are in hopes the French will be able to give a good account of Mr. Graves.

"Mr. Burnside requests me to inform you that, as he was not on the New Windsor side, and being disappointed in not succeeding agreeable to his wishes, he entirely forgot to leave your letter for Mr. Rutgers; a neglect for which he is very sorry. Dean has returned to us from Capt. Moodie, being very much indisposed. By the same post as this is sent, I have forwarded you a letter from Capt. Wool. Thus have I agreeable to my promise, given you a short and as minute a detail of circumstances as my abilities will admit, and hope they may prove agreeable. I am joined with Mr. Burnside and the remainder of the officers, with best wishes for your happiness. Believe me with every sentiment of respect and esteem,

Your obedient humble servant,

JAMES BRADFORD."

"P. S. A line by the first conveyance and what you are like to succeed in, would be agreeable—pray inform me if you have ever seen my father. Excuse this scrawl, &c., &c.

Capt. Machin appears to have been engaged at New Windsor much of the year 1781, in the recruiting service. Having the principal direction of that business, and to have disbursed much



money.\* The following paper from Capt. Hubbell shows in truth the situation as regards funds, of very many of the officers of the American army in the latter part of the war.

"Dear Sir—I am under the necessity of sending a man off into Connecticut to-morrow morning, and have not a shilling of money for the poor fellow to bear his expenses—should therefore be exceedingly obliged to you for some money. As his going is a matter of moment to a number of the gentlemen of the regiment, beg you would oblige me in this request—12th March, 1781.

I am, respectfully yours,  
J. HUBBELL."

"Capt. Thomas Machin.

Difficulties in the recruiting service were unavoidable, as the following paper directed to "Capt. Machin, Artillery Park, New Windsor," will show.

"*Pokeepsie, April 20th, 1781.*

"Dear Sir—Mr. George Thompson informs me that one of your recruiting parties pretended to have enlisted his son, and that he apprehends difficulties will arise on the subject. If Mr. Thompson's information is right, it would appear that the business was unduly managed; however, as the old gentlemen is of respectable character, I would not wish you to carry the matter to any extremity; but to submit it to the determination of the civil magistrate. He is ready to appear before any in the neighborhood.

I am yours sincerely,  
GEO. CLINTON."

"Capt. Machin.

In the fall of 1781, Capt. Machin accompanied the park of Gen. Washington's army, and, as engineer, aided in laying out the American works at the memorable siege of Yorktown. His skill in gunnery, which caused Gen. Sullivan to exclaim of the cannonading at Newtown, near Elmira, that it *was elegant*, was again manifested in the early part of this seige, by sending a shell, agreeable to the orders of Gen. Knox, into the magazine of a small British vessel lying in the river, and blowing it to atoms. Gen. Knox is said to have remarked, with evident satisfaction, as the shell performed its mission, and the men were blown into the

\* In furnishing recruiting officers with orders, it was particularly specified that they should enlist *no slave, tory, or individual who had been in the service of the enemy.*



air—"See the d—d rascals go up."—*Thomas, son of Capt. Machin.*

The following paper from His Excellency, affords additional evidence of his friendship and confidence :

"*Pokeepsie, 13th January, 1782.*"

"Dear Sir :—I was favored with your letter of the 16th ultimo, a few days ago. I am happy in the good opinion entertained of Mr. Tappan, and particularly obliged to your friendly offers respecting him, which shall be communicated to his father. The warrants for the several gentlemen lately appointed to your regiment will be forwarded by the present conveyance to the Colonel, as also certificates of their appointment to the War office.

"I have nothing worth communicating. Mrs. Clinton begs you to accept the compliments of the season; and believe me,

"Dear Sir, with great regard,

"Your most obed't serv't,

"*Capt. Thomas Machin.*"

"GEO. CLINTON."

The following paper from Maj. Popham, without date, gives further evidence of the straitened circumstances of the American officers, or rather of one of them :

"Dear Machin :—The situation of my finances at present obliges me to apply to you as a *dernier resort*. It must be hard times when a soldier is obliged to sell or pawn his arms. If you could dispose of my sword at Head Quarters, it would be infinitely agreeable to me; and if it was in your power to spare me a few dollars for present use, until your return, you would add much to the happiness of your friend. Nothing but extreme necessity could induce me to write what I could not speak last night when I saw you.

"Adieu.

"*Capt. Machin.*"

W. POPHAM."

"Paid £3 4s 0 specie.

" " 3 4 0 new emission.

"May 14— 3 4 0 specie."

By the memorandum on the paper, we may suppose the major's sword was sold for \$24. Poor fellow: I hope he was not compelled, after parting with his *trusty blade*, to follow the fortunes of war with a wooden one.

The following extracts are copied from a letter from Lieut. Morris to Capt. Machin, dated Burlington March 24th, 1782.

"You expressed an anxiety to be acquainted with our movements after we reached Lancaster: to comply with your desire I am under a friendly injunction to give a relation of the expedition. We were ordered to that post to guard prisoners from thence to Phila-

delphia, but before we reached the place of our destination, we found ourselves fatigued to a great degree, from the deepness of the roads, and the summit of every hill we passed presented to our view the same sad comfort that we had just passed. However, a generous supply from the financier, and my own resources, rendered every obstacle a mere trifle, and soon erased from my memory that gloomy prospect I had pictured in my imagination.

"Suppose we change the subject and give you a little of the news. The French have at length succeeded on Brimstone Hill, in the island of St. Christophers, and are in quiet possession of that place. The British made an attempt to succor the garrison by landing 1000 men at Basseterre, but were repulsed with 400 of them killed.

"We are furnished with the debates of the House of Commons by a late arrival from France: the minority are thundering away against the prosecution of the American war, and the other party are strenuously opposing them. I am clearly of the opinion they will continue it a campaign or two longer. The Dutch, to my great astonishment, seem disposed to make a peace with England through the mediation of Russia. This circumstance, added to a little success the British have had in the East Indies, convinces me they mean to spend a few millions more. I must conclude; and believe me to be,

"Your friend and humble servant,  
"W. MORRIS."

"P. S. Remember me to my uncle Richard if you should see him."

The period at length arrived when Capt. Machin's great skill in *engineering* could not construct a *breast-work* to guard him against an arrow from Cupid's bow. In other words, when he was to love one of the softer sex, and feel confident that a virtuous young woman reciprocated the sentiment. The following extracts of a letter from Maj. Doughty hint the existence of the skillful captain's tender passion.

"*Burlington, March 27th, 1782.*

"*My Dear Sir*—How goes on recruiting? Do you meet with encouragement? Is there any prospect of money from the State? These are questions I wish you would answer for me, for I feel interested in them all.

"You promised to write me on the subject of my *depreciated notes*, and the prospect of improving them to advantage by joining you in the purchase of the lands formerly Gen'l Clinton's: you have forgot your promise—perhaps your being in love, and the pear object that inspires that interesting passion so totally engrosses your attention, as to leave no room for your friend Doughty.

I know he must give way both to the passion and its object, but still he must claim a share though a small one, of your friendship and attention; and believe me that he esteems them both not a little. Adieu—make my respects to Col. Bedlow and family, Maj. and Mrs. Logan, and believe me to be with the greatest truth,

“Your friend and servant,

“JNO. DOUGHTY.”

The following paper relating to the service in which he was then engaged, was received by Capt. Machin per Col. Cobb.

“*Head Quarters, 24th May, 1782.*

“*Gent’n*—You will proceed to Fish Kill and there apply to Colonel Weissenfels’ for the proportion of the levies destined for your line, one half of which are for the regiment of artillery and the other half for the regiment of infantry.

“So soon as you have received your proportion of Col. Weissenfels’ regiment, you will send them on to the regiments for which they are destined, under the care of an officer, and the remaining officers will wait at Fish Kill to receive those which will be sent from Col. Willet’s regiment, which are to be divided in the same manner. Before you send away the recruits you will make a return to me of the number you have received.

“I am, &c.

“Signed GO. WASHINGTON.”

“*To Capt. Machin,*

“*Lt. Forman,*

“*Ens’n Swartwout,*

} *York Line.”*

The following extracts are made from a letter from Lieut. R. Parker to Capt Machin, dated George Town, July 6th, 1782.

“Capt. McClure and myself are stationed at this place. Its situation I suppose you are acquainted with: its trade is much increased within a short time past, a number of valuable prizes have been sent here. Rum, and most kinds of West India goods are plenty. The southern army and the country in general receive great advantages from it. I believe they could scarcely be supported without it.

“Here are a number of fine girls and rich widows. I have not yet got far in love—but can’t promise for the future—some fair nymph may captivate my heart—and while guardian reason sleeps, Cupid’s fatal *shaft* may wound my rising *heart* and make me own his superior power, &c., &c.

“We have no news: Gen. Greene lays near Goose Creek, twenty miles from Charleston. An evacuation of Charleston and Savannah is daily expected by our sanguine friends.

“I have hardly got over celebrating the fourth of July in a Bacchanal frolic—Impute my inaccuracies to a pain in the head, &c.”

A letter from Capt. Machin to Oliver Wendell, Esq., of Boston, of which the following is a copy, discloses the fact fully at which Maj. Doughty hinted, and adds another evidence to the truism, that the course of true love is beset with thorns, thistles, and a multitude of briers.

“ *New Windsor, 10th Aug't, 1782.*

“ *Honored Sir*—An experimental knowledge of your philanthropy has emboldened me to address you on this occasion. Know then, my Dear Sir, that I am at this time engaged to a young lady in the State of New York: the day for our union was set, and we both, I am led to believe, waited with equal anxiety for the arrival of that happy period; in which I think two feeling souls would have been happily united in the honorable bonds of Hymen. But to my great mortification, somebody was pleased to inform the young lady's friends that I had a wife in Boston. And as I always did, and I hope ever will, detest *deception*, be it of what kind soever it will: and much more that which is of all the most villanous; I therefore, relying on our former friendship and your justice, make no doubt but you will give the bearer, Mr. Dunning, the young lady's and my friend, whatever information he may require relating to my conduct when in Boston. Please to give my compliments to Mrs. Wendell, and believe me Dear Sir, to be, with all the esteem that is due to honor and merit,

“ Your hum'l. serv't,

“ THO'S MACHIN.”

“ *The Honorable Oliver Wendell, Esq.*”

The aspersions of some villain on the fair fame of Capt. Machin were satisfactorily removed by Mr. Dunning's visit to Boston, and his marriage took place in August, 1782. He was married to Miss Susan, daughter of James Van Nostrand; who resided at or near Huntington, L. I. The marriage took place at the house of Timothy Dunning in Goshen, who had previously married a sister of Miss Susan.

The following letter from Lieut. Woodward, shows to some extent the popularity and influence of Capt. Machin in the army.

“ *West Point, 26th Oct. 1782.*

“ Dear Sir—While I was gone to Poughkeepsie the day before yesterday, Lt. Tappen was so imprudent as to give permission for William Ockerman to leave the Point to go to New-Windsor, and return the same evening; but in order to keep alive the *dignity* of his former conduct he has broke into Goshen goal.—That is, I am informed he is taken by the constable for a tavern debt. Col.

Stevens desires you will take upon you the trouble of procuring his enlargement and send him to Camp. His inducement for requesting you to undertake the task, is because that you by some means or other can accomplish it, while another officer would not be able to succeed. You must give my best compliments to Mrs. Machin, &c. &c.

“ I am, dear sir, with every sentiment of respect,

“ Your ob’t humble serv’t,

“ Capt. Machin.”

“ PETER WOODWARD.”

At this period *general* officers were deficient in funds.

“ *Little Britain, Nov. 9th, 1782.*

“ Dear Sir—I received your favor by Serj’t Reino, and should have sent you the balance of Maj. Bush’s account as you have made it out if I had the cash, which article I never was scarcer of than at present ; at the same time must inform you that you have not given me all the credit in your account that I ought to have, but that is a matter we can easily settle when opportunity serves. I wish it was in my power to pay you the whole or half due on the account of your location ; as soon as it is I will do it : if I can’t soon I will give you a note or bond with interest.

“ I am, sir, yours, &c.

“ Capt. Machin.”

“ JAMES CLINTON.”

Considerable correspondence passed between Joseph Wharton, Esq. of Philadelphia, and Capt. Machin in the year 1782 : it began in the latter part of the preceding year, as the following letter will show.

“ *Philadelphia, Dec. 24th, 1781.*

“ Mr. Thomas Machin. Sir—You have been so obliging as to offer me your services in the State of New-York, I commit to your care two deeds from Col. George Croghan to me ; the first dated April 3d, 1780, for *twenty-five thousand four hundred and seventy-seven acres of land* with a release for the same ; and the other for *eleven hundred and fifty-seven acres*, dated June 27th, 1780, with its release ; and both tracts situated on and near Lake Otsego in Tryon county in that State. These lands becoming more and more valuable, it’s necessary the deeds should be recorded in the proper office. And as I have some reason to apprehend an assignment of the Mortgage on these lands to the late Governor Franklin, is attempting to be obtained, when probably some *hasty* step may be pursued to recover payment by public sale, injurious to my property ; I earnestly press it upon your friendship to have the deeds recorded in Albany, or wherever the most suitable office is, in the most expeditious manner ; and for your assiduity herein as well as the necessary charges, I will gratefully pay due honor to your draft. The repossession of the deeds will give me great satisfaction ; yet I would not have them sent, unless a gentleman of char-



acter and whom *you know* can be found to be entrusted with them. In the mean time, I beg you will inform me by post the moment the deeds are enrolled, as well as any farther information you may receive of the value of these lands in consequence of any *rise* since your departure from their vicinity: for surely the late glorious victory to the Southward, and our proximity to absolute independence must have started the value of such excellent tracts.

“I have shown you Mr. Hooper’s Field Book, containing as well his description of the exterior lines of my 15074 acre tract on the Tenedena, as the qualities of the land of each 1000 acres: the whole being surveyed into fifteen lots; and you have read that the soil and other natural advantages are very good and exceeding great. Will you, sir, be pleased to enquire the utmost price that can be obtained for the whole of this tract payable in two months, or rather one-half in six weeks and the other in three months with interest in specie or sterling bills on France? Because if this 15000 acre Tract will command what I conceive it will, it will enable me to keep the Otsego Tract to a future day, and a far more beneficial price. I must also request you will have the offices searched to know what Mortgages and Judgments are on the Otsego Tract; for although there may be a Judgment or two, yet whether the legal steps have been pursued to secure payment previous to the time you will have my Deeds enrolled is the question. Among other favors you are going to bestow on me, do let me know the Law of your State in regard to Mortgages, that is whether any time is limited for their recording? Whether a second or third Mortgage being entered first does not supersede, or at least obtain *first* payment? And if a Deed enrolled prior to a previous Mortgage (as in my case) will not bar a recovery by the Mortgage?

“It may be necessary to explain the hint I have given relating to Governor Franklin’s\* Mortgage for £1800 your money, which is, that his creditors here and in Burlington are endeavoring to procure his Assignment of Testatum, (if I have the word right) and although it ever was my disposition that Justice should be done, yet prudence dictates a cautionary prevention to the sale of my estate to my disadvantage, which surely would be the circumstance if it was to be sold at this period. For I suppose in cases of Sequestration your State, like ours, hath taken care that just creditors shall be satisfied as far as such estate will admit.

“I am, with respect,

“Your most obed’t humble serv’t,

“JOS. WHARTON.”

\* Lest all my readers may not be aware of the fact, I will here remark, that the Governor Franklin above alluded to was a son of Doctor Franklin, and at the beginning of the war was Governor of New-Jersey—that not having the just counsels of his father, and possibly the fear of God before his eyes, he espoused the cause of the mother country which had honored him with the Executive authority of a Colony; and was soon arrayed in sentiment against that great and good man his father; whom the world de-

Under date of Sept. 11th, 1782, Mr. Wharton wrote Capt. Machin as follows.

"My situation in life requiring me to raise a capital sum of money in the course of the Winter, has determined me to sell the Otsego Tract, containing about 27,000 acres; provided I can be paid one-third part on the sale, and the remainder in the Spring. My price will be *twenty shillings* this currency (*specie*) per acre. [He proposed to let 7,000 pounds of the purchase remain unpaid with security. He considered the land worth, he said, *thirty shillings* per acre. He added]—Should my limit be thought too high, let me know the highest sum obtainable for the whole Tract, payable in part down and the rest in six months with interest; or if it would be more agreeable, I will take *twenty thousand pounds* for it and the purchaser to be accountable for the incumbrances;" [which were some 2,000 pounds N. Y. currency on that and a Tract of 40,000 acres adjoining.] Col. Croghan was buried about ten days since."

The reader may here see what was once considered the value of the rich lands in and around Cooperstown, which money will now hardly buy.

The campaign of Gen. Sullivan in 1779, discovering the valuable lands in Western New York, was the means of their being brought into market. The following paper, from Capt. Nestell, shows where some of the lands in the earliest transfers were situated, and the price they brought:

"April 17, 1783.

"Received of Ebenezer Burling the full sum of thirty pounds, which was his subscription for a Right of six hundred acres of land between Seneca and Cayuga Lakes. Received by me,  
"PETER NESTELL."

On the 21st of January, 1783, Gov. Clinton sent the bounds of a certain lot of land to his friend, with the following request:

"Capt. Machin will please to take a view of the above Tract and see that the settlements are properly made, and no land cleared that will injure the Tract in point of timber. That the persons who live on it clear annually a proportion of swamp, and plant out *fruit-trees*, and make such agreement with them as shall be easy and reasonable; but they are to be Tenants at Will, as I may conclude to sell. Fix on the most convenient place for a homestead, and erecting a dwelling house, &c., supposing it to be divided into two farms.

"GEO. CLINTON.

"*Pokeepsie*, 21st Jan., 1783."

lighted to honor. A desire to retain place has forfeited for many individuals the good opinion of the virtuous, and the rich inheritance of parental good deeds.

On the 17th of April following, Capt. Machin wrote Gov. Clinton from *Murderer's creek*, that he had made a beginning of the works at the *Great Pond*—was cutting timber, and expected to have a dwelling ready to move into within five weeks from that time, &c., &c.; to all of which doings Gov. Clinton wrote an approving letter April 19th.

Mr. Machin was commissioned a captain by Gov. Clinton, and the council of appointment March 12th, 1793, to take rank as such from August 21st, 1780. The appointment was confirmed by Congress on the 28th of the following April.

On the approach of peace, in 1783, we find Capt. Machin laying aside his warlike implements, and Cincinnatus like, following his plow. He settled at a place called New Grange, Ulster county, a few miles back of Newburgh, where in 1784, he erected several mills, as a grist-mill, saw-mill, &c.

The following order of the quarter-master-general, on Lieut. Denniston, is inserted to show the reader how particular that officer was in closing his official business :

“ *New York, April 10, 1784.*

“ Sir:—Capt. Machin will deliver you six spades and shovels, which he received last summer from the store at Newburgh. You will deliver him one band for the nave of a wagon wheel, and two wagon boxes, to complete a wagon he bought of the public.

“ TIM: PICKERING, Q. M. G.

“ *Mr. George Denniston, West Point.*”

About the 1st of September, 1784, Gov. Clinton removed from Kingston to New York, as appears by several letters to Capt. Machin, directed to his address at “ *Great Pond, Ulster county;*” by which it appears the captain was to send down his winter's stock of fire-wood.

The following credible voucher appears to close the correspondence between Capt. Machin and his former general :

“ This is to certify that I have been acquainted with Capt. Thomas Machin ever since the year 1776, and have had considerable dealings with him, and I always found his accounts to be *just*.

“ Given under my hand the 7th of March, 1786.

“ JAMES CLINTON.”

The correspondence between Machin and Gov. Clinton, closed with the following letter, (until the latter was chosen Vice President of the United States,) which is inserted because it tells so credibly and justly for that plain-hearted and honest republican, who not only dealt honorably with the unprotected himself, but was gratified to find others do likewise. In fact, he gained the reputation among the soldiers of the Revolution, of being a very plain, honest, unostentatious patriot,—and as an evidence of the fact, was exceedingly popular wherever known.

“ *New York, 13th November, 1786.*

“Dear Sir :—The bearer is a brother-in-law and executor to Mr. Briggs, deceased. He has been here some time settling the affairs of the deceased. Among the little property he has left for his children, the location under a military right in your hands is a principal part. Mr. McClagley is anxious to know how it stands, and whether you have done the needful to give a title to the executors for the use of the infants. For this purpose he means to call on you on his way home, and the regard I have for the widow and family has induced me to write you on the subject, not doubting, at the same time, that you will pay every attention to them and their business.

“Yours, sincerely,  
GEO. CLINTON.”

“*Capt. Machin.*

On the 18th of April, 1787, Capt. Machin formed a copartnership with Samuel Atlee, (a porter brewer,) James F. Atlee, David Brooks, James Grier, and James Giles, (an attorney at law,) all of the city of New York. The term specified for its continuance was seven years, with a capital of £300. The firm seems to have been formed for the avowed purpose of coining copper, provided Congress, or any of the state legislatures, enacted a law allowing individuals to coin money. As the object was to make money, a small capital was considered sufficient for the undertaking. On the 7th of June following, that firm formed a copartnership with one then existing, which consisted of four partners—Reuben Harman, Esq., William Coley, of Bennington county, Vermont, Elias Jackson, of Litchfield county, Connecticut, and Daniel Van Voorhis, goldsmith, of the city of New York—for a term of eight years from the first of the following July, that being the limitation of an act of the legislature of Vermont to said Har-



man, for the coinage of copper. The first mentioned firm was to furnish a capital of £500 for the concern; £200 of which capital, with £400 more, New York currency, to be paid to the latter firm two years after, was to be theirs as an equivalent for admitting the New York firm into communion with them—the latter being required to furnish no capital. The ten partners were to enjoy equally “the benefits, privileges, and advantages arising from the coinage of copper in the state of Vermont, to be coined in that state, and also in Connecticut, New York, and elsewhere, as the parties should think fit. On or before the first day of July, the first mentioned, or New York firm, were required, by the co-partnership, “to complete, at their own cost, the works then erecting at the mills of the said Thomas Machin, near the Great Pond, in the county of Ulster,” while the other part of the firm agreed, in the same time, to complete works they were then erecting, at Rupert, in the county of Bennington, Vermont. Agreeably to the written contract, Giles was to have charge of the writing and book-keeping; Harman and Coley were to manage the *money changers* at Rupert; and Machin and J. F. Atlee were to “manage, act, and perform that part of the trade which concerned the coinage of money and manufacturing hard ware,” at Machin’s mills; Grier was to be “cashier of the money coined at Rupert;” Van Voorhis, “cashier of the money coined at Machin’s Mills;” Grier and Jackson were to have the general management of the expenses, purchase of necessary articles, &c.; while other joint business was to be performed by Brooks and Samuel Atlee. It was further stipulated that Giles should keep a “certain book of resolutions;” that the firm should meet, either in person or by proxy in other members, agreeably to a written form of authority incorporated, on the 1st day of February, June, and October of each year, at Rhinebeck, New York, unless otherwise agreed upon. In case either of the partners obtained a grant from Congress or any of the states to coin money, the profits resulting from such act were to be shared by all the partners,—who also bound themselves personally, “in the penal sum of one thousand pounds,” for the punctual performance of the contract.



Whether the long firm of *money makers* ever coined coppers enough to fill the pockets of all the Green Mountain boys; or whether they found the business profitable, is uncertain; but from Mr. Machin's papers I am led to conclude they never effected much. At his mills perhaps a thousand pounds of copper was manufactured, as appears by the papers, in the year 1789; previous to which little seems to have been done. "What is everybody's business is nobody's;" and the saying seems to have been verified in the doings of this *copper firm*: for in a letter from J. F. Atlee to Mr. Machin, dated Vergennes, October 14, 1790, he expresses a wish that the concern might arrive at a settlement on *equitable terms*, and compromise their matters without a *tedious and expensive law suit*.

In Jan., 1797, Capt. Machin removed from New Grange to the town of Mohawk, Montgomery county, from which town were afterwards organized the towns of Charleston, Glen, and part of Root. The fall previous to his removal he had visited his lands, accompanied by two hired men, and erected a log tenement, cleared a fallow, planted fruit-trees, currant bushes and sallad,—made sap-troughs, &c., &c., as is shown by a journal he kept at the time. His lands were situated 10 miles north of Schoharie Court House, and 20 south of Johnstown village.

Capt. Machin continued to practise surveying after his removal to Montgomery county, and several officers of the army were among those who profited by his skill, among whom were John Lamb, his former colonel, and Gen. Nicholas Fish. Among Mr. Machin's personal friends was George Tiffany, Esq., a native of Massachusetts, who settled in Schoharie about the time the county was organized.\* Capt. Machin took no little pains to educate his children, a son and a daughter.

At the close of the war, Capt. Machin became a member of the Cincinnati Society. He also belonged to the fraternity of

\* Mr. Tiffany was a fine classic scholar, and while in Schoharie county was distinguished for his legal ability. Previous to his locating in Schoharie he taught an Academic school in Albany, believed to have been the first of the kind established in that city. He removed from Schoharie to Ancaster, Upper Canada, where, at a good old age, he died Jan. 8, 1842.

Free Masons, and on the establishment of a lodge in Schoharie, he was appointed master to install its officers. Silas Gray was also appointed as senior and Johannes Dietz junior wardens of the same. The following is the evidence of Capt. Machin's appointment :

"To all GREETING—

"Be it known that I, Ezra Ames, Grand High Priest of the G. R. A. Chapter of the State of New York, by virtue of power in me vested by the third Sec'n. and fourth article of the General Grand Constitution, Do hereby authorize and empower our worthy Brother, Thomas Machin, to install the officers of *Ames Mark Lodge*, in the town of Schoharie, County of Scho'e., agreeable to the Gen'l. Grand Constitution of the United States, and to make returns of his proceedings thereon, at the next session of the G. Ch.

"EZRA AMES.

"*Albany, 4th Feb. 5S07.*" [Year of the world.]

By the following letters from his old friend Gov. Clinton, who was then Vice President of the United States, it appears that Capt. Machin sought for a pension, and, afterwards, its increase :

"*Washington, 14th April, 1808.*

"*Dear Sir*—Agreeably to the request contained in your letter, I have done what was necessary on my part to give success to your application to be put on the Pension List. It gives me pleasure to render you this little service, being, with great regard,

"Yours sincerely,

"GEO. CLINTON.

"*Capt. Thomas Machin.*"

"*Washington, 6th March, 1810.*

"*Dear Sir*—Yesterday I received your letter of the 22d of last month. You may rely on every assistance in my power to afford, to obtain an increase of your pension. But the preparatory steps to an application can be done most conveniently to you in the State, under a commission from Mr. Talmadge, the District Judge. I have requested Mr. K. K. Van Rensselaer to communicate to you the manner in which this commission is to be obtained, as well as the necessary subsequent measures to be taken previous to your application; to accomplish which, if expeditiously performed, may yet be in season for the present session of Congress. I am, with best respects to Mrs. Machin,

"Yours sincerely,

"GEO CLINTON."

"*Capt. Thomas Machin.*"

Capt. Machin, after seeing the country of his adoption, in the defence of which he had freely shed his own blood, pass triumphantly through two wars with the previously acknowledged mistress of the *wave*, at the close of each gaining the admiration and respect of the world, died at his residence in Charleston on the evening of April 3d, 1816, aged 72 years. A brief notice of his services and death appeared in the Albany Gazette of April 15th, which closed with the following sentence: "*In the camp and in retirement his qualifications were holden in very high consideration.*" He was buried with Masonic honors.

In a letter of personal introduction from Col. Aaron Burr to Henry Remsen Esq., dated at N. Y., Dec. 30, 1830, I find the following sentence; "Capt. Machin, who will have the pleasure to hand you this, is the son of my old friend and fellow-soldier, Capt. Machin, who was a distinguished officer in our Revolutionary war, and was probably known to you."

## CHAPTER XX.

Schoharie county, which is situated mostly within the forty-second degree of north latitude, was organized by a Legislative Act of April 7th, 1795, from portions of Albany and Otsego counties. It is centrally distant north from New York city 150 miles, and west from the capitol 40 miles; and presents a very uneven surface—from river flats to mountain elevations. The county originally consisted of six towns, which, except Schoharie, were not incorporated until March 17th, 1797.

In 1801, New York contained thirty counties; and by a Legislative Act dated April seventh of that year, they were properly divided into towns. The Session Laws printed in 1802, provide, that—

“The county of Schoharie shall contain all that part of the State bounded easterly by the county of Albany, northerly by part of the south bounds of the county of Montgomery, as hereafter described, westesly by a line beginning at the south-west corner of a tract of land formerly granted to Jyhn Lyne, and running thence the following courses and distances as marked by order of the Surveyor General: south twenty-one degrees and forty-eight minutes west, two hundred and nineteen chains, to the place where Joshua Tucker formerly resided; thence south seven degrees and forty-eight minutes west, one hundred and ninety-three chains, to the eastermost line of a tract of land known by the name of Belvidere patent; thence south nine degrees east six hundred and ninety-five chains to a ceertain hill known by the name of Grosvenor's hill; thence with a direct line from the north-west cornes of Stroughburgh patent; thence with a direct line to the most northerly corner of Harpersfield on the Charlotte or Ade-gataugie branch of the Susquehanna river; thence south-easterly along the north bounds of Harpersfield to Lake Utsayantho, and southerly by a line formerly run from the head of Kaater's creek, where the same issues out of the southerly side or end of a certain

lake or pond lying in the blue mountains to the said Lake Utyas-antho, and by part of the north bounds of the county of Greene.

“And all that part of the said county of Schoharie beginning at a point in the west bounds of the county of Albany, two miles southerly of the place where Foxes creek intersects said west bounds, thence westerly to the place where Weaver’s stony creek originally emptied itself into the Schoharie creek, and thence westerly to the place where the Cobelskill road crosses the Punchkill, thence with a straight line to a point in the south bounds of the county of Montgomery five miles westerly of Schoharie creek, thence easterly along the county of Montgomery to Duanesburg, thence along the westerly and southerly bounds of Duanesburg and the west bounds of the county of Albany to the place of beginning, shall be and continue a town by the name of SCHOHARIE.

“And all that part of the said county of Schoharie beginning at the place where the Cobelskill road crosses the Punchkill, thence with a straight line to the north-west corner of a patent granted to Michael Byrns and others, thence with a straight line to the west corner of the house now or late of Jacob Best near the head of the north branch of the Westkill, thence continuing the same line to a tract of land called Blenheim, thence easterly along the northerly bounds of Blenheim until it strikes Schoharie creek, thence easterly with a straight line to the north-east corner of the dwelling house now or late of Moses Winter, thence with the same line continued to the west bounds of the county of Albany, thence northerly along the same to the south-east corner of the town of Schoharie, thence along the southerly bounds thereof to the place of beginning, shall be and continue a town by the name of MIDDLEBURG. [The citizens now write it Middleburgh.]

“And all that part of the said county of Schoharie beginning in the middle of Schoharie creek where the same is intersected by the southerly bound of the town of Middleburg, thence along the northern bounds of a tract of land called Blenheim to the north-west corner thereof, thence continuing the same line to the county of Otsego, thence along the easterly bounds of Otsego to the county of Delaware, thence along the northern bounds thereof to the middle of Schoharie creek, thence northerly through the middle of said creek to the place of beginning, shall be and continue a town by the name of BLENHEIM.

“And all that part of the said county of Schoharie beginning at the north-east corner of the town of Blenheim, thence southerly along the eastern line of said town to where the said creek is intersected by the south bounds of the county of Schoharie, thence easterly along the said south bounds to the county of Albany, thence westerly along the same to the south-west corner of the town of Middleburg, thence westerly along the south bounds of the same to the place of beginning, shall be and continue a town by the name of BRISTOL.



“ And all that part of the said county of Schoharie, beginning at a point in the northern boundary line of the same, six miles and a half easterly of the north-east corner of the town of Schoharie, in the said county, thence southerly in a direct line to the west corner of the dwelling house now or late of John Redington, thence in a direct line to the westerly corner of the dwelling house now or late of Peter Bogardus, and thence in a straight line to the northerly corner of the dwelling house now or late of Joseph Webb, thence in a direct line to the westerly corner of the dwelling house now or late of Nicholas Smith, thence south-westerly to the nearest point in the division line between the counties of Schoharie and Otsego, thence southerly along the bounds of the county of Otsego to the north-west corner of the town of Blenheim, thence easterly along the north bounds thereof to the south-west corner of the town of Middleburg, thence northerly along the westerly bounds of the town of Middleburg and Schoharie to the north bounds of the county, and then along the same west to the place of beginning, shall be and continued a town by the name of COBELSKILL.

“ And all the residue or remaining part of the said county of Schoharie, shall be and continue a town by the name of SHARON.”

After Schoharie county was organized, a new era began in its history. The frequent assembling at court of men distinguished for oratory and legal acumen—especially where science and letters have been neglected, cannot fail rapidly to improve the state of society and manners of the people. The first attorneys who located in Schoharie, were George Tiffany and Jacob Gebhard.

I had occasion, in the fore part of this book, to speak of the cleanliness of the pioneer settlers, and now advert to that of their descendants—and in justice must observe, that few, if any districts can show a greater proportionate number of very tidy housekeepers, than may now be seen in the Schoharie valley.

Twice in a year, at least, Dr. Franklin's description of a house cleaning is realized, not only in the primitive Schoharie, but in the Mohawk river settlements. Every article of furniture, from the garret to the cellar, is then removed, that the place it occupied may be scrubbed. Lime is profusely used on such occasions, especially in the Spring, and it would be difficult to detect the track of a fly on a window, wall, or floor, after the operation. The description given by *Brooks*, in his travels in Europe, of the neatness of the people in some of the Dutch and German countries through which he traveled, is applicable, in many instances, to

the people of Schoharie : for as he says—"It is scrub, scrub, scrub from morning till night—from pillar to post—where there is dirt, and where there is none." The Schoharie women usually cleanse their floors daily, sometime semi-daily, by a process they call *filing*, which is done with a piece of sacking retained in the hands instead of being secured to a mop-stick.

"Time," says Irving, "which changes all things, is but slow in its operations upon a Dutchman's dwelling." The Germans and Dutch do not generally display as much taste in the selection of a site for, and the erection of their dwellings, as do the English. Frequently a Dutchman's house fronts its owner's barn, instead of fronting a public highway. A small kitchen and an oven are often separately erected—both detached from the dwelling. Houses recently built in Schoharie discover far more taste and beauty than those constructed in former times.

If the Dutch manifest a want of taste in erecting their dwellings, some of the Yankees do quite as much in locating their out-buildings; for it is but a few years since there might have been seen opposite many good farm-houses in some parts of New England, a corn-crib or waggon-house, the front of which was literally covered with sheep, racoon, or skunk-skins.

Schoharie county contains 621 square miles. Its average length is 30 miles from north to south; and width 22 miles from east to west. Its population, in 1825, was 25,926; in 1840, 32,358: of which latter number, 16,002 were white males; 15,863 white females; 253 black males; and 240 black females. The valuation of assessed property is usually about \$2,000,000. The county contained in 1840, 199 common schools, with 9,244 scholars: and no distillery, where were six in 1824.

About the year 1810, a *federal* newspaper was established in Schoharie by Thomas Tillman, called *The True American*; soon after which *The American Herald*, a *republican* journal, was issued by Derick Van Vechten. In 1818, Mr. Van Vechten published a paper called *The Budget*; and the same year Solomon Baker commenced a paper entitled *The Schoharie Observer*, which he published nearly five years. In 1819, *The*

*Schoharie Republican*, a weekly sheet, as were its predecessors, was established, and is at present conducted by William H. Gallup. For several years previous to 1830, *The Lutheran Magazine*, a monthly periodical, was issued at the *Republican* office. A whig journal, entitled *The Schoharie Patriot*, was begun in 1837, by Peter Mix, and continued until 1844.

The Loonenberg, now Athens Turnpike, leading from Athens to Cherry-Valley, passes through the county from northeast to southwest; and the Western Turnpike crosses the north part of the county. The route of the Canajoharie and Catskill Railroad is also laid through the county from north to south.

This county presents almost every variety of soil and surface, from river flats to mountain elevations, and yields good crops of such grain as is usually produced in the same climate. It is also well timbered: along the water-courses chiefly with oak, hickory and pine, and on the uplands with maple, beech, birch, basswood and hemlock.

The interval lands along the Schoharie, so justly celebrated for their beauty and fertility, are a rich alluvial deposit, formed by the transporting agency of the river, and its numerous tributaries, of such portions of earth, abraded and disintegrated rocks, and vegetable and animal matter as came under its influence. The most southern flats are least calcarious, being principally formed from the contiguous sand rock; consequently the soil is not as productive without more artificial enriching.

The county is well watered, and affords numerous hydraulic privileges, some of which are improved, and others not. It is principally watered by the Schoharie, the largest tributary of the Mohawk, and its numerous inlets. The Schoharie heads in the town of Hunter, Greene county, the principal branch rising in a small swamp, about eight miles from the Hudson, at Saugerties. The country is there very mountainous, ridges of the Catskill mountains separating the water-courses. Among the most important tributaries near its source, are Eastkill and Westkill, which rise in Hunter and run into it in Lexington; and Batavia creek, which enters it at Prattsville.—*W. W. Edward.*

Entering the county, the Schoharie courses northerly through the towns of Summit, Blenheim, Fulton, Middleburgh, and Schoharie, until it arrives near the north end of the latter, when it takes an easterly course, and unites with the Mohawk five miles east of Fultonville,—its whole length being about seventy miles. From the mountainous nature of the country through which it flows, this river often rises suddenly, doing at times no little damage to the numerous mills its rapid course has invited to its banks.

The first bench of common plea judges in Schoharie county, consisted of William Beekman, Adam P. Vrooman, John M. Brown, David Sternberg, and Jonathan Danforth; the former was first judge about forty years. The courts, for a time, held their sessions in a small building still standing in the rear of John Ingold's dwelling.

Schoharie sends two members to the State legislature; with Otsego forms the twenty-first congressional district: and with Albany, Schenectada, Delaware, Greene, Columbia, and Rensselaer counties, makes the third senatorial district.

The north part of the county is mostly underlaid with limestone, which supplies an abundance of good building materials; and as it contains numerous *fossils*, some of which are very rare,—there being among them, the *lily encrinite* and several varieties of *trilobite*,—it affords the *practical geologist* a good opportunity to investigate his useful science. There are, also, in the limestone region, several *caverns* of notoriety, the novelty and sparry formations of which invite to their dark chambers the admirer of nature's wonder workings.

There have been but two executions in this county for a *capital offence* since it was formed. The first was that of Abraham Casler for the murder of his wife, which he effected by administering, alternately, *opium* and *arsenic*. Casler was not a resident of the county, but committed the deed at an obscure tavern, while traveling through it. As was generally believed, from testimony adduced on the trial, he desired to marry another woman, and poisoned his wife to prevent her proving an obstacle in the way



of gratifying his unholy desires. Mrs. Best, the inn-keeper's wife, an intelligent woman, was the principal witness. He was tried before Judge Yates, Sept. 12th, 1817, and publicly executed on the hill east of the court-house in May following.

The other case I notice more minutely, not with a view to increase its notoriety (for I am conscious that the relatives of this criminal are highly respectable), but to show how an inscrutable Providence follows crime with detection and punishment.

John Vanalstyne was indicted Nov. 18th, 1818, for the murder of Wm. Huddleston, and tried for the offence at a special court of *oyer and terminer* at the Schoharie court-house, in Feb., 1819. The trial commenced on the morning of Feb. 17th, before Chief Justice Ambrose Spencer, and lasted nineteen hours. The criminal testimony was entirely *circumstantial*. Eighty-three witnesses were subpœnaed, seventy-five of whom were present at the trial.

On Friday afternoon, Oct. 19th, Huddleston, then a deputy sheriff of the county, went on horse-back to the house of Van Alstyne to collect several executions, amounting to about \$1450. The former was seen just at night with the latter, soon after which, as subsequently appeared, he must have killed him at or near his barn. The mysterious disappearance of Huddleston aroused public inquiry as to his fate, and when Van Alstyne was questioned about his last interview with him, he stated that he had paid up the executions the former had against him, saw them *endorsed satisfied, and supposed the d——d rascal had run away with the money*. He was also heard to say that no sheriff held any execution against him. When interrogated after the murder, his statements, as to the amount of the several executions against him and the moneys paid to the sheriff, were contradictory. After the murder he took several bank-notes to a neighbor to be changed, which appeared to have been purposely torn, and on one blood was found. He also stated in a conversation that the sheriff had on spectacles when he settled with him.

Fearing detection, Van Alstine clandestinely left home on the evening of the 16th, and on the 17th, a great number of men having assembled from different parts of the county, his pre-



mises were strictly searched, which resulted in discovering traces of blood in the barn, and on several fences leading towards a plowed field, 400 yards from the house; and, finally, in finding the body of Huddleston in that field, where the accused had been harrowing on the day after the murder, although he had sown no grain. A further search in the barn brought to light the papers of the sheriff concealed in the hay, among which were the executions against Van Alstyne, *not endorsed*; and under a sill a heavy oak stake was found bloody, and with hair upon it; the spectacles of the sheriff were also found on the premises. In a swamp, some distance from the barn, a place was observed where a horse had been fastened some days, and under a log near was found part of a sheep skin used by Mr. Huddleston upon his saddle, while the saddle was found beneath a small bridge by children pursuing a squirrel.

No doubt was entertained but what Van Alstyne was the murderer, and had fled with Huddleston's horse. Accordingly, a reward of \$250 was offered by Governor De Witt Clinton, and \$100 more by Sheriff Keyser, for his apprehension. The Governor increased the whole reward to \$500. It was shown on the trial that the prisoner was seen at Trenton and Lowville, *in possession of Huddleston's horse*, making his way towards Canada. Arriving at Buffalo, he took passage on Saturday, the 14th of Nov., on board of the Com. Perry, Capt. Johnson, a vessel bound for Detroit, assuming the name of John Allen, and accompanied by a suspicious person calling himself Isaac Page.

On board the Com. Perry Elias W. Slocum, who was removing with his family from Jefferson county to some part of Ohio, had also taken passage, to be landed at Sandusky. On Monday morning the vessel was at anchor at Long Point, where, in consequence of a strong gale having arisen, she parted her cable, and was obliged to put back to the harbor at Black Rock, from whence she had sailed. While on the lake, Slocum had some conversation with Van Alstyne, who betrayed, as he thought, evidence of criminality; and having a newspaper which contained the promised reward for the apprehension of Huddleston's supposed mur-

derer, with a description of his person, he at once suspected his fellow passenger, whose personal appearance and clothing answered the description, and, on arriving at Black Rock, he apprehended and lodged him in Buffalo jail. When arrested, he denied that his name was Van Alstyne, or that he had ever known a man named Wm. Huddleston, but was soon after identified by several persons who knew him, and he was removed to Schoharie.

The conduct of Page, after Van Alstyne was arrested, in connection with the fact that he had an over-coat of the prisoner in his possession, increased the suspicion of Slocum as to his true character, and it was only by the threat of his arrest as an accomplice that he could get rid of him, he evidently being intent on aiding the prisoner in an escape. What became of the horse rode off by Van Alstyne was never known at Schoharie. The trial was conducted by Henry Hamilton Esq., the District Attorney, assisted by M. J. Cantine Esq.; and the prisoner was defended by Jacob Gebhard and T. J. Oakley Esquires. Nine jurors were set aside as having pre-judged the case. The cause was ably managed, and resulted in finding the prisoner guilty of the crime for which he was indicted. In pronouncing his sentence, Judge Spencer depicted in glowing colors the enormity of the prisoner's offence,—warning the numerous assemblage against the indulgence of crime. Van Alstyne was publicly executed on the hill, where Casler had previously suffered a similar death, March 19th, 1819; and there would seem to have been a most signal interposition of *Providence* in bringing him to punishment. Circumstances, over which human action could have no control, urged on the car of Justice and sealed his untimely fate. On board of a vessel bound to a distant port, he felt comparatively safe from pursuit; but instead of gentle breezes wafting the vessel to her place of destination, a furious gale broke her fastenings, and compelled a return to the starting point to deliver up the offender. The result of this man's trial, for a crime witnessed by no human eye, should deter all persons from the perpetration of any offence against law, committed in the hope that, because unseen by *man*, they will escape detection, for *it is not in man that walketh to di-*

*rect his steps.* The love of money, or free indulgence of passion, may cause man to violate wholesome laws; but *vengeance is mine, and I will repay the guilty, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

The Lutheran and Dutch Reformed Churches were organized in the Schoharie settlements at an early period. The following brief history of the Lutheran Church was mostly taken from a sketch of its establishment and progress which appeared in the Lutheran Magazine in 1827, prepared by Rev. Dr. G. A. Lintner.

Soon after the Germans located at Schoharie, they formed a church, and had preaching occasionally as before stated. On the 7th of September, 1742, the congregation gave a call to the Rev. Peter Nicholas Sommer, a native of Hamburg, Germany, who was ordained in that city as pastor of this church on the 21st of the same month. He arrived in the field of his labors May 25th, 1743, and on the 30th preached his introductory sermon. The first officers were Abraham Berg, and Michael Freymaurer, elders; Henry Schaeffer and Peter Loewensteen, deacons. The first vestry meeting was held on the 8th of June, 1743, at which it was resolved to commence erecting a parsonage house for the minister, which dwelling was to serve the present purposes of a church. On the 3d of July following his arrival, Mr. Sommer first publicly administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Schoharie, when the communicants participated. On the 12th of September, the same year, public worship was held in the new parsonage, and continued to be for several years. Early in 1750, preparations were commenced for erecting a church; on the 10th of May the corner stone of the foundation was formally laid by the pastor; and the edifice, which was built of stone from an adjoining field, having been completed, it was solemnly *dedicated* on Whitsuntide, May 6th, 1751.

Mr. Sommer, who appears to have been much esteemed by his people, was a faithful laborer, and for many years not only preached in his own church, but at stated periods in the German settlements of Stone Arabia, Little Falls, in and near the Mohawk valley; Rhinebeck, East and West Camp, Claverack, and Loonenburgh, on the Hudson; Hoosick Road, in Rensselaer county; and

Albany, Helleberg, and Beaver-dam, in Albany county. The congregations in the three first-mentioned places, the nearest of which was twenty-four miles from Schoharie, were for a time included in his pastoral charge ; but the Rev. Johan Frederick Ries became their minister in December, 1751.

In December, 1758, Mr. Sommer preached for the first time in Cobelskill, and there administered the sacrament ; after which period his services were mostly confined to the Schoharie settlements. In 1768 he became suddenly blind, and was led to church by Andrew Loucks, for many years its clerk and chorister, continuing to discharge most of the official duties with the infirmity.\* Old age obliged him to retire from the ministry early in 1789. From Schoharie he went to reside with relatives in Sharon, where he died about the year 1795 ; and his bones now repose on the farm of Judge Robert Eldredge, the grave being identified by a fragment of coarse sandstone placed at its head, on which are rudely engraved the initials of his name in the following order, N. S. P., the last letter being now hardly intelligible. If the Lutheran churches he was instrumental in organizing in Schoharie county, would remove the bones of this faithful old laborer in their service to the Schoharie burying ground, which is located on the site of the church in which he ministered, and erect a suitable monument over them, they would do a laudable act, and discharge a duty they owe to his memory.

In 1791, the Rev. Anthony Theodore Braun took charge of the Lutheran church in Schoharie, and continued its pastor until 1794. He was succeeded by the Rev. Frederick H. Quitman in 1795. In 1796 the congregation erected the brick edifice it now

\* After having been totally blind nearly twenty years, he awoke one Sabbath morning, to his great surprise, with his vision restored. His wife had previously risen, and calling her into his room, he exclaimed, "*I can see as well as ever I could*." She was at first terrified, supposing him deranged ; but he continued, "*Be not alarmed—my sight is restored!*" "What can you see ?" his wife, still trembling, interrogated. "*I see you—see every object in the room—see yonder trees!*" said he, pointing to several large trees visible from a window. He left his bed with feelings few can realize, put on his clothes, and from that time to the hour of his death, his perception of objects was restored to its former condition.

occupies. Mr. Quitman left his station in 1798. In 1799 Mr. Braun was recalled to the pastoral duties of this church, but again relinquished them in 1801. The church was without a pastor until 1805, when the Rev. Augustus Wackerhagen entered upon those duties. In 1815, he accepted a call from Columbia county.

The four pastors named were men of good classic attainments,—were fine German scholars,—usually preached in the German language,—and were very much respected. In 1816, the Rev. John Molther became pastor of the congregation; but on account of his *dissipation* he was removed by the Lutheran Synod in 1818.

In 1819, the Rev. George A. Lintner was called to preside over this congregation, and the church has prospered ever since, he still being its pastor. This institution, which had to contend with many trials in its early existence, known only in *border settlements*, was evidently of Divine origin. It struggled through scenes of difficulty and danger in the early history of the settlement, shedding the light of Christian benevolence around the footsteps of the pioneer. It was threatened by the perils of the French and Indian wars: and Domine Sommer preached a proper discourse and administered the sacrament to a company of volunteers, who marched from Schoharie in 1746, to join an expedition against Canada. In the American Revolution, religious service was mostly discontinued in border settlements—and this congregation knew from experience the horrors of a civil war—a condition of things much at variance with the doctrines of Christianity.

During our last war with Great Britain, many individuals and associations sent out small notes, usually denominated shin-plasters, and this church issued them. The following is a blank copy of one:

“THE CONSISTORY OF *St. Paul's Church*, IN SCHOHARIE, PROMISE  
TO PAY THE BEARER, ON DEMAND, TWO CENTS.  
Nov. 16, 1814. \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary.”

At what period the Reformed Dutch Church was established in Schoharie, I am unable to show; it is believed, however, to have been nearly as early as was the Lutheran Church. The church records were consumed in the parsonage some years since, which



misfortune deprives me of data necessary to show its organization and early history. I, however, gleaned from one of its oldest male members, that the first house of worship stood several rods northeast of the old stone church; was constructed of wood; was built after the model of the Dutch Church in Albany, with a steeple over the centre; that it was provided with a small bell, the rope of which came down in the middle of the building; and that it was razed at the time the stone edifice was erected in 1772. The clergyman who preached in Schoharie at an early day, officiated in the German language in Schoharie, and in low Dutch, at Weiser's dorf, where a Dutch church was erected nearly as early as was the one in Schoharie. The Dutch Church had similar difficulties to surmount in its early history to those which usually attend the planting of churches in a new country.

Judge Brown, as he assured the writer, was clerk and chorister of the Schoharie Church, or fore-singer, as then called, before the Revolution, and used often to go from his residence in Carlisle, on Sabbath mornings, to church *on foot, a distance of fourteen miles*, and be there in time for the service; returning home after it in the same manner. Is there a man in the county now, would go that distance to church every Sabbath, *if he could be driven there in an easy chair?* If there is, let him declare it, "*for him have I offended.*"

The Rev. Mr. Schuyler, long a pastor of this church, died during the Revolution, and I am not able to show who have been his successors in regular order. I have in my possession a blank call for a minister to take charge of the Dutch churches in Schoharie, written in German, from which I learn that he was to receive, for every person baptised, a fee of *one shilling*; for every couple married, a fee of *eight shillings*; that his salary was to be paid half in *cash* and half in *wheat*; that his fire-wood was to be furnished scot-free; and that he was to have four Sabbaths in a year to himself.

Until about the year 1820, not only the Schoharie churches, but those in other parts of New York and New England, were nearly all destitute of stoves, or any convenience for warming them in the

winter ; and the families in attendance usually carried small foot-stoves to church on the Sabbath, supplying them with a few coals, buried in hot embers, at the dwellings nearest the sanctuary. Although the health of numbers was endangered by attending divine service before the introduction of the box-stove, still the churches were in general well filled with attentive hearers. Between the morning and afternoon service, that part of the congregation living remote from country churches, at the period under consideration, usually depended on the hospitality of the good people living near, at whose dwellings they not only received the benefit of a warm fire, but frequently were served with a luncheon of fried cakes, cheese, and apples, and a glass of good cider. The intermission, which was seldom over an hour, was often spent in discussing some religious topic, to the edification of numbers present.

In former times, the churches of New England and New York were provided with *tiding-men*—persons appointed to keep order in the galleries, having authority to change the position, or even impose corporeal punishment, on such as in any manner disturbed the congregation. Cornelius Van Schaack, who was for a long time sexton of the old Dutch Church in Albany, and during the Revolution, was much of the time its tiding-man. Often might this efficient officer have been seen during the service to enter the gallery with a hickory-gad, and lay it over the backs of mischievous children, or noisy half-grown boys, if they did not see him coming and escape punishment by creeping under the benches, which was not unfrequently the case.—(*James Lansing.*) Tiding-men were continued in many of the New England churches to as late a period as the year 1825.

Before the Revolution, constables in Albany were required, as a part of their duty, if they saw children at play on the Sabbath, to correct them—and those guardians of order were often seen to enter the door-yard of a rich man, and flog his peace-disturbing boys, regardless of what parents or guardians might say or do.—*J. Lansing.*

BLENHEIM,\* a town in the south-westerly part of Schoharie county, is centrally distant 44 miles south-west from Albany; 20 west of south from the county seat; and 35 north of west from Catskill. It is bounded north by Fulton, east by Broome and Conesville, south by Delaware county, and west by Jefferson. Population 2,726.

Most of the early settlers in the south part of this town were from New England, and their descendants are engaged in the dairy business. A large tract of land, embraced in Scott's Patent, is located in Conesville, Broome, and southerly part of this town. Much of the tract is now owned by the Livingston family, and leased to tenantry. The prevailing strata of rock is graywacke and red-sand, the latter affording, in several quarries, a good building material. In it are also found some fossils. This town contains 2 *post-offices*—*Blenheim* and *North Blenheim*—and 4 *churches*—2 *Methodist*, 1 *Baptist*, and 1 *Reformed Dutch*.

BROOME (name changed from Bristol, April 6, 1818,) is about 35 miles south-west of Albany, 15 south of the county seat, and 30 from Catskill. It is bounded north by Middleburgh, east by the county of Albany, south by Conesville, and west by Blenheim—somewhat resembling a boot in its shape. Population 2,404. Its early settlers were mostly from New England. It has 3 *post-offices*—*Livingston*, *Smithton*, and *Gilboa*—and 6 *churches*—2 each *Presbyterian* and *Baptist*, and 1 each *Methodist* and *Christian*.

Chancellor Lansing once owned a valuable tract of land in this town. In 1818, Jacob Sutherland Esq., who had married a daughter of the chancellor, went to reside at a romantic place in North Blenheim, to look to his own and the possessions of his father-in-law; about which time he was appointed District Attorney for the U. S. District Court. While a resident of the county, he was appointed one of its judges; and when the convention met in 1821 to alter the constitution, he was sent, with Olney Briggs and Asa Starkweather, to represent Schoharie county in the convention, and proved an efficient member. Soon after the adoption of the new constitution, Mr. Sutherland was elected a state senator, but a seat being offered him on the bench of the Supreme Court, he declined the former, accepted the judgeship, and removed to Albany. Some years since, he resigned the office of judge, received that of clerk of the same court, and removed to Geneva. He died at Albany May, 13, 1845, aged about 58 years.

One of the first settlers in the interior of this town was David Elerson, who located in 1793. Previous to the Revolution he was engaged in the Indian wars of Virginia, in which he received a bullet through his left shoulder. Several Indians having secreted themselves behind a fallen tree, were doing fearful execution in the ranks of the colonial troops, and Elerson determined, at the peril of his life, to punish them. While crawling towards a covert for that purpose, he received the ball as described, but soon had the satisfaction, by one or two effective shots, of driving the enemy from their position.

He was in the Monmouth battle, under Col. Morgan, and escaped unhurt. Col. Morgan hung upon the rear of the British army some distance in their retreat. Arriving near Middletown, Elerson, Murphy, Wilbur, and Tuffts (all of whom were afterwards on duty in Schoharie,) obtained permission to leave the ranks, with the caution of extreme vigilance from their commander, and pursue the enemy towards Raritan Bay. Having separated from his companions, Elerson found himself in sight of his foes. The army had embarked at Gravelly Point, and effected a landing on Staten Island by the boats of the enemy's fleet, then in the bay to cover their retreat. Nothing remained on the Middletown shore except 40 or 50 horses, several baggage-wagons and a phaeton, supposed to belong to Sir Henry Clinton. This property he perceived was guarded by only two sentinels, one of whom stood on the beach near the water. Arriving unperceived within a few yards of the two soldiers, one of whom was a mounted trooper, he leveled his rifle and shouted to them to *surrender themselves prisoners*. The man on foot was so surprised that he let his gun fall into the water, wetting its powder. The dragoon rode into the water, with the intention of swimming his horse to the island, but the tide compelled him to return. In the mean time, Elerson ordered the other man to harness a span of good horses before the carriage, and compelled, with leveled rifle, his immediate compliance. Returning to the beach, the trooper was evidently intent on getting a pistol shot at Elerson, when the latter ordered him to leave his presence or surrender himself a

prisoner. Elerson did not wish to fire, as the British army and fleet were in sight, and would doubtless turn their artillery upon him; but the sentinel, drawing a pistol, did not heed his threats, and he sent a ball through his heart. The rifle's report had hardly ceased its echoes, when a cannon shot plowed up the sand near his feet; and just as the second ball lodged in the loose soil near him, having reloaded his piece and observed that his carriage was ready, he bounded into it, and, with his prisoner for driver, soon left the Middletown hills, and rode in safety to the American camp. This daring hero, as he assured the author, sold his carriage and horses for \$187.50, and sent the money to his poor father in Virginia. As was the case with many other brave spirits of the Revolution, Elerson could neither read or write. He died in 1838 or '39.

David Williams, one of the captors of Major Andre, removed from South Salem, Westchester county, 1805, to this town, and settled on the farm of the late Gen. Shays,\* near Livingstonville,† where he resided to the time of his death. For a sketch of his life, the capture and execution of Andre, &c. see the succeeding chapter.

CARLISLE, formed in 1807, from parts of Cobelskill and Sharon, is about 8 miles long from east to west, and nearly 7 wide: situ-

\* This Gen. Shays was the man who headed an insurrection against the government of Massachusetts in 1786: the malcontents were dispersed in 1787, by State troops under Generals Shephard and Lincoln. This transaction has since been called *Shays' Rebellion*. Not long after becoming thus celebrated he removed to Schoharie county, from whence after a residence of some 15 years, he went to reside at Cayuga, N. Y., where he died in 1821. He drew a pension of \$240 a year; a captain's pay for services in the Revolution. Shays was a man of noble and commanding figure, fine martial appearance, and pleased with the title of General, with which he was usually saluted.---*W. W. Murphy.* †

† A war path in the Revolution led from Kingston to Schoharie. Following up the Catskill through the towns of Durham and Rensselaerville, it proceeded onward through Broome to Middleburgh. At Livingstonville in Broome, directly on this path, lived Derick Van Dyck, who settled there before the war; and often did Timothy Murphy partake of the hospitality of this pioneer when on his secret expeditions into that neighborhood, and regale himself with a good draught of buttermilk; a beverage of which it is possible the Indian also partook in the absence of his destroyer.—*Judge Murphy.*



ated 10 miles northwest of the county seat, and 40 from Albany. It is bounded north by Montgomery county, east by Schoharie, south by Cobelskill, and west by Sharon. Population 1,850. It has 1 *post-office*, called after the town; and 3 *churches*, 1 *Presbyterian*, 1 *Methodist*, and 1 *Union church*, the latter built by several denominations. The two first named churches are at *Carlisle*, the principal village in the town, which is situated on the Western Turnpike; the other is at *Grosvenor's Corners*, a small hamlet in the south part of the town. Near the latter place is an interesting locality to geologists, of *fibrous sulphate of barytes*; the fibres being from half an inch to two inches in width. Near the barytes is a layer of *fibrous carbonate of lime*, or *arragonite*.

A part of this town was embraced in the local settlement denominated New Rhinebeck, its pioneers having removed there about the year 1760, from Rhinebeck, on Hudson River. The four families which first located were those of Andrew Loucks, Conradt Engle, Philip Kerker, and Peter Young. The late Judge Brown settled near them soon after.

Its substratum is limestone, which is filled with indubitable evidence of former conditions of this region, since which *change* has passed over it, and drawn her petrifying finger in calcarious lines around its mundane existence. In the rock are numerous *caverns*, a few only of which have been visited. *Young's* and *Selleck's* caves are the most extensive of any as yet explored, and they have only been but partially so. The latter, first visited in 1841, by George Shibley and J. C. Selleck after whom it is called, is said to be roomy, affording the visitor fine specimens of spar.

In the woods, about a mile northwest of Carlisle village, is a small cavern, in which it is believed the Indians often found rest when visiting the neighboring settlements in the Revolution, as it afforded them ample security. Near it issues a fine spring. The bones of animals, fire brands, and some fifty sticks, set in the ground, apparently, for the purpose of drying meat, gave evidence of repeated visitants, to those who discovered the place after the war.

In this town is one of the most lofty elevations in the county, known by the aboriginal name of *O-waere-souere*. It is of a co-

nical form, and may be seen from Fulton county, fifty miles north of it.

COBELSKILL, centrally distant from the Court House, 10 miles, and from Albany 40, is bounded north by Carlisle, east by Schoharie and Fulton, south by Summit and Otsego county, and west by Seward and Sharon. Population 3,583. This township is of an oblong shape. The Cobelskill, a fine mill stream, rises on the Tallmadge farm, in Worcester, Otsego county, near the source of Schenevas creek, and running northeast sixteen miles, falls into the Schoharie near Central Bridge. West creek, its greatest tributary, rises on the borders of Cherry Valley, and affording numerous good mill seats in Seward, through which it courses easterly, unites with the Cobelskill near Cobelskill Centre.

The first settlement in this town was made on the flats, a strip of rich alluvion, extending several miles along the Cobelskill, in 1750, by Shafers, Boucks, Warners, Lawyers, Frimires, Borsts, and Browns, from Schoharie, and George Fester, from Pennsylvania, all of whom were of German origin.

In this town there are 6 *churches*, and 6 *villages*, each with a *post office*, viz: *Cobelskill, Richmondville, Lawyerville, Barnerville, Cobelskill Centre, and Punchkill*. The first two villages are the most important; the former having 2 *churches*, *Lutheran* and *Dutch Reformed*,—several stores workshops, &c., and probably the best *district school house* in the county, a neat edifice, recently erected. The other villages have 3 *churches*, 1 each,—*Lutheran, Methodist, and Baptist*, a tannery, several workshops, stores, &c. The rock in the south part of the town is principally sandstone and graywacke—the grit of the former in some quarries being suitable for grindstones. The north part of the town abounds in limestone, in which are numerous unexplored caverns.

Among the early settlers at Lawyerville, were Capt. James Dana, a native of Ashford, Connecticut, and John Redington; the former having served his country as a captain of the Connecticut line of Continental troops, and the latter a soldier of that gallant band. Dana was at the battle of Bunker Hill, and in

command of a company of men was stationed, with Capt. Knowlton and his company, by the orders of Gen. Putnam, to prevent the enemy from gaining Col. Prescott's rear, and thus cut off the retreat of the Americans to the main-land. From this position, Capt. D., with Lieut. Thomas Grosvenor and Sergeant Fuller, at a given signal, fired on Maj. Pitcairn, a British officer, marching with a body of men toward the fence, and he fell mortally wounded. During the battle a cannon shot struck the fence, and forced a rail against Dana's breast with such violence as to prostrate him; but he regained his feet, and kept his ground until the troops left the hill, when he drew off his men and aided in covering the retreat of the army in good order. While retreating a bullet lodged in his canteen.

After the battle of Bunker Hill, a colonel's commission was offered Captains Knowlton and Dana, which the former accepted and the latter, from his native diffidence, declined: he, however, left the army at the close of the war, with the rank of brevet-major. On arriving at the American camp, near Boston, and becoming apprized of the bravery of the two captains mentioned, and their deeds in the late battle, Gen. Washington immortalized their names in *his first general order*, announcing as the secret countersign, *Knowlton!* and *parole, Dana!*

Thomas Grosvenor, who was a lieutenant, and third in command of the troops stationed at the fence on Bunker Hill, and who was promoted to colonel,—in a letter to Col. Daniel Putnam, who was compelled to vindicate the character of his father, Gen. Israel Putnam, from an ignoble charge of cowardice made by Gen. Dearborn, which letter is dated April 30th, 1818, in speaking of the officers at that station, makes no mention of Capt. Dana, who was second in that command, *and why he does not seems mysterious*, for Dana was the man who first communicated the evident intention of the enemy to out-flank the Americans. Lieut. Grosvenor was wounded, and retired early from the field. That Dana was a modest, uneducated man, affords no good reason why laurels fairly won by him should be claimed by others. The truth is

Capt. Dana merited a position in Col. Trumbull's picture of that battle, which is given to another.\*

On an occasion when Gen. Washington was reconnoitering the American lines, Capt. Dana was on duty in the neighborhood, and observing the former riding in a direction where the enemy were just before posting sentinels, he said to him—" *Perhaps your Excellency may be in danger of a surprise if you proceed further that way; the enemy in force are just over that knoll before you.*" The Commander thankfully received the caution, and bowing respectfully, galloped back to his quarters. But for the prudence of Capt. Dana, it is possible Gen. Washington would have been a prisoner to Sir Henry Clinton. Capt. Dana stood high in the confidence of the Commander-in-chief.

When he located at Lawyerville, he erected a good log dwelling, in which he ever after resided. His virtues were held in high estimation in the community. On the organization of a brigade of New York infantry, Capt. Dana received from Gov. Lewis, as a partial reward for services rendered his country, a general's commission. He was the first man who ever held that office in Schoharie county, and discharged its duties with becoming dignity.

The following anecdote of Gen. Lee was related to his friends by Gen. Dana: While the latter was reconnoitering on some occasion in the vicinity of the enemy's works, they were firing shells towards the American camp. Observing a shell to strike near him, he stepped behind a large tree near by. At the moment it fell, and while the fuse was burning off, Gen. Lee arrived upon the spot with a favorite dog. He did not even seek the covert of a tree,—and the dog, imitating his master's example of unconcern, with curiosity to know the cause of its buzzing, ran up to smell of it at the instant it exploded. The dog

\* Gen. William Eaton, who was the first American to unfurl the banner of freedom on the sands of Africa, (in 1803,) and win for his country the respect of the haughty Bashaw of Tripoli, by planting the American flag on the subdued fortifications of the city of Derne, the second city of importance in his dominions, commenced studying the art of war at an early age, as a private soldier, under Capt. Dana.

was sent several rods, though not killed. Seeing his canine friend thus precipitated, he addressed him, unconscious of being overheard—" *You d—d fool! have you been so long in the service, and don't yet know what a bomb is?*"

John Redington was a private in Capt. Dana's company of Connecticut troops, and was taken prisoner at Horseneck by Delancey's cavalry. In the retreat of the Americans he concealed himself under a bridge, and being discovered by the enemy he was brought out, divested of his hat, shoes, &c., and thus driven on foot by the unfeeling corps, with which he was compelled to keep up, all the way to New York, where he was incarcerated in that charnel, the *Sugar House*—enduring such sufferings as an iron frame only could endure—to the end of the war. On the return of peace he removed from Connecticut to Cobelskill, and settled in the neighborhood of his respected captain. In consequence of his patriotism and sufferings, he was given the command of the second company of cavalry ever organized in Schoharie county. He was a very enterprising man, and the Reformed Dutch Church, near his residence, was erected about the year 1800, through his influence.

The commissions for Gen. Dana and Capt. Redington, were obtained for them through the influence of a gentleman of great literary attainments, then residing in their neighborhood, who communicated the incidents in their lives, here given, to the author.

The following inscriptions are copied from monuments in the grave-yard at Lawyerville:

"In memory of General James Dana, who died October 16th, A. D. 1817, aged 85 years."

"Erected A. L.\* 5817, by Morality Lodge, No. 217, of Free and Accepted Masons, in memory of William Huddleston, Esq., who was assassinated on the 9th of October, 1818, while in the discharge of his official duty, aged 60 years, 3 months, and 26 days."

"In memory of Captain John Redington, who died April 12th, 1830, aged 73 years, 6 months, and 14 days. A Revolutionary veteran, an enterprising settler of the county, of distinguished public spirit—an honest man."

\*Anno Lucis—Year of Light.



"Doct. Jesse Shepard, late a Judge of Schoharie county, died April 19th 1832, aged 57 years, 10 months, and 18 days."

CONESVILLE, southeast town in the county, was formed March 3d, 1836, from Broome and Durham in Greene county, and is bounded in the act of incorporation as follows :

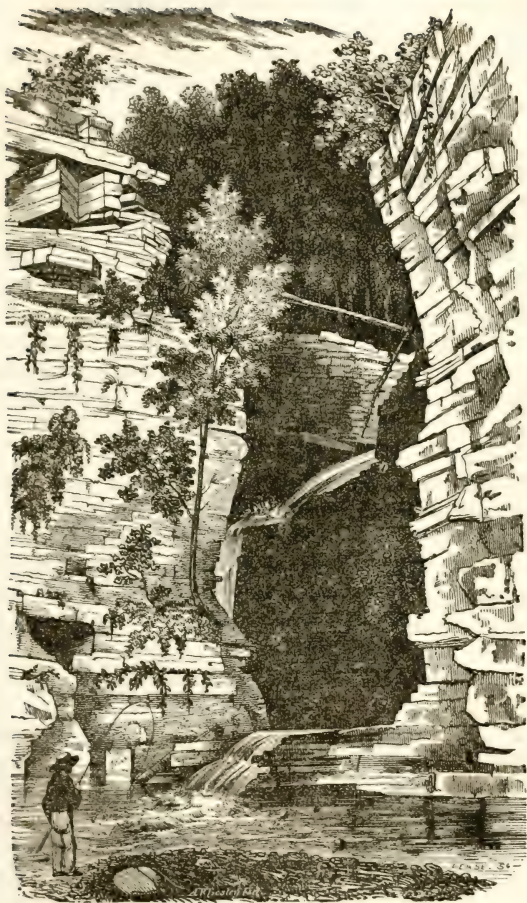
"Beginning at the centre of the Schoharie creek in the county of Schoharie, where the Manor creek empties into the same ; thence north 46 degrees east 176 chains, to the northwest corner of a lot in Scott's patent known as the *Leming lot* ; thence east along the lines of lots in the said patent 320 chains, to the east line of the said patent 21 chains, to the north line of Stringer's patent ; thence east along the north line of the said last mentioned patent, 176 chains to the east line of the county of Greene ; thence eastwardly along the north line of the said county of Greene, 34 chains ; thence south two degrees east, 166 chains to the dividing line between the towns of Durham and Windham ; thence westwardly and northwardly along the said dividing line and the dividing line between Durham und Prattsville, until it intersects the north line of the county of Greene ; thence westwardly along the said county line, to the centre of the Schoharie creek, and thence northwardly down the centre of the said creek to the place of beginning."

This town is centrally distant from Albany 40 miles ; from the county seat 26 ; and from Catskill 30. Population 1,621. It is watered by Diesman's creek, which runs into the Schoharie near Gilboa : on this creek near its mouth is a beautiful cascade, of some 60 feet descent. It has 1 *post-office*, bearing its name ; and 3 *churches*, 1 *Dutch Reformed*, and 2 *Methodist*. The pioneer settlers of this town were Peter Richtmyer, Judge John Reynolds, Thomas Fitch, John Walker, and Elisha Bates ; the four last being New England men : the settlement was made about the year 1795. The inhabitants are mostly engaged in the *dairy business*.—*A. Richtmyer and W. W. Murphy.*

FULTON, incorporated in 1828 from part of Middleburgh, is centrally distant from Albany 45 miles, and from the county seat 12. Population 2,146. On the flats in this town were some of the earliest settlements made in the county by the Dutch at Vrooman's Land, and the Germans at Brakabeen. It has 3 *post-offices* *Fultonham, Brakabeen, and Byrnrville* ; and 4 *churches*, 1 *Reformed Dutch*, 1 *Baptist*, 1 *Union*, and 1 *Lutheran*.

*Bouck's Falls*, situated on Panther creek, a mill stream which rises in Jefferson, and runs into the Schoharie just above Panther mountain in this town, are among the most interesting natural curiosities in the State. At my first visit to this waterfall (in Oct. 1837), I named it after Col. J. W. Bouck, who accompanied me to it. The stream dashes down a precipice in a little distance at least one hundred feet, into a deep pool its action has worn at the base. The bold cliffs tower upwards on either side about 200 feet, while the trees—standing upon the summit like sentinels on the walls of a castle—present a picture romantic and enchanting indeed. In its descent, the water is concealed by projecting rocks except in two places, the one near the bottom, and the other 50 or 60 feet above, at which latter place it dashes down with thundering, deafening roar. The opening cut in a mountain gorge by this cataract, is from 200 to 300 feet across at the bottom and much less at the summit, so that could the hill tops unite, a *cavern* would thus be formed several hundred feet in depth, with a vaulted ceiling nearly a hundred feet high. The rock is *sandstone*, similar to the prevailing formation of Otsego and Madison counties, characterised at this point by the *inoceramus* and several other varieties of fossil shells, and farther upward by the *trilobite De Kayii*.

As if to add interest to the scene at the time of the visit named, there stood *Dick Bouck*, then a gray-headed old negro, who, as before stated, was the little captive slave taken with William Bouck and part of his family in 1780. Dick had been fishing for trout until they would no longer bite, and was then *hooking* them up. He recounted the story of his captivity—but could not resist the temptation, as a good sized fish came within reach, to attempt its capture, thus often losing the thread of his tale, to the great amusement of his auditors, who were constantly reproving him for his inattention. He several times raised his hooks from the water for the purpose of finishing his narrative, but the line would as often sink unconsciously into it, to capture a good sized trout. Poor Dick, he sleeps with his fathers, and has for several years; but long will the author remember the story of his captivity, and the novel manner in which he related it.



BOUCK'S FALLS.



Ex-Governor William C. Bouck, is a native of this town, and was born January 7th, 1786. His farm is situated upon an island on the east side of the river, and his dwelling is pleasantly located near the bank of the river, fronting the road, the river, and on its opposite shore a romantic mountain called Ottegus-berg—Panther mountain.

His early education was good considering the former condition of our common schools, at which he received a considerable share of it. His was however a mind of that inquisitive sort, susceptible of improvement from general reading and close observation.—Numerous have been the instances in our country, in which men have—imitating the commendable example of a Washington and a Franklin, by untiring application after they have done going to school, *where in fact an education is but just begun*,—stored their minds with a fund of useful knowledge which has been the means in after life, of elevating them to stations of distinction and honor.

In 1807, then 21 years of age, he was elected clerk of his native town, and the following year its supervisor. In 1812, he was appointed sheriff of Schoharie county, by Governor Tompkins, and the year following was chosen to represent that county in the assembly, to which body he was returned in the years 1814—'15, and '17. While there, he was active in sustaining the course of Gov. T., who seconded the measures of the general government in prosecuting the war with England to a glorious termination. In 1819 he was elected a state senator, about which time he was appointed colonel of the 18th regiment of New-York infantry; the duties of which latter office he is said to have discharged with becoming dignity and skill. Still in the senate in 1821, where he was respected for his personal knowledge, he was chosen from that station by nearly the unanimous vote of both houses of the legislature, *irrespective of party considerations*, a member of the canal board, and was appointed to superintend an important portion of the Erie Canal then constructing. He was retained as canal commissioner for *nineteen years*, during which period most of our canals—public works of which our State may very justly be proud—were prosecuted to completion.



In 1840, Mr. Bouck was the democratic candidate for the office of Governor, and in 1842, having been again nominated, he was elected by a large majority.\*

Col. Joseph Bouck, brother of the late governor, has once been a member of Congress.

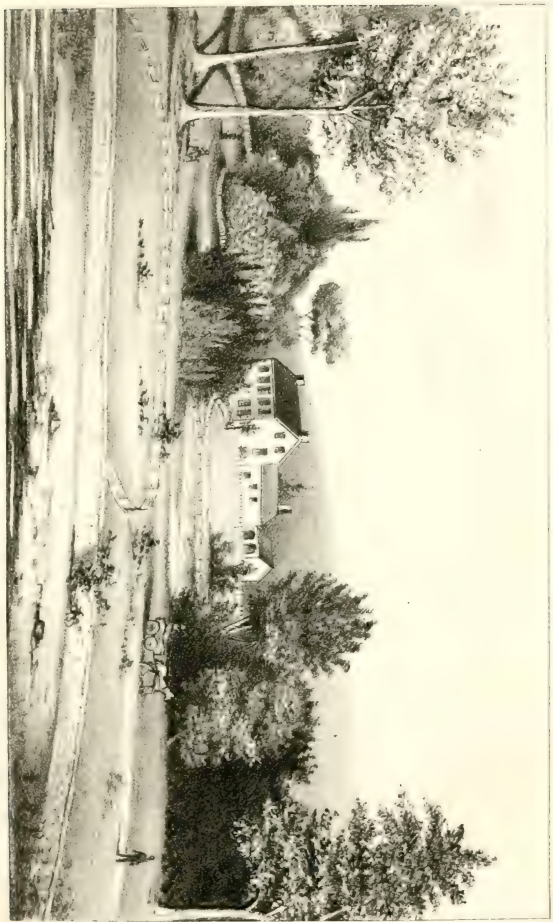
Mr. Abraham Keyser, formerly sheriff of Schoharie county, and for many years treasurer of the state,—the duties of which office he discharged most satisfactorily—was also a native of this town, his ancestors being among the earliest German settlers.

JEFFERSON, erected from Blenheim in 1803, is 20 miles southwest of the county seat, and 53 from Albany. Population 2,033. Its inhabitants—who are mostly descended from New England parentage—are extensively engaged in the dairy business. It has 2 *post-offices*, *Jefferson* and *Mossville*, and 5 *churches*, 3 *Methodist*, 1 *Baptist*, and 1 *Presbyterian*. The Delaware river rises in this town. *Jefferson Academy*, incorporated at an extra legislative session in 1834, is pleasantly located in the village of Jefferson.

MIDDLEBURGH is centrally distant from the court-house 5 miles, and from Albany 38. It is bounded north by Schoharie, east by Albany county, south by Broome and Blenheim, and west by Fulton and Cobelskill. Population 3,841. In this town there are 3 *post-offices*,—*Middleburgh*, *Franklinton*, and *Hunters Land*,—and 6 *churches*,—1 *Lutheran*, 1 *Presbyterian*, 2 *Methodist*, 1 *Quaker*, and 1 *Independent Presbyterian* or *Bellingerite*.

There is in the south part of Middleburgh a place called the *Vlaie*—a German word, signifying a marsh or swamp. The place was known as a black-ash swamp, nearly a mile in length and covering many acres, when it obtained the name. It is on

\* Many a word spoken in jest becomes prophetic. About the year 1820, an honest farmer living on Fox creek, held a conversation with a friend of ours, in which Mr. Bouck was mentioned. Of the latter gentleman the former thus remarked: "Depend upon it that man will yet be governor of this state; for instead of going round a hill as other men do to see what is on the opposite side, he looks right through it." This casual remark was made at a time, when his excellency's intimate friends did not anticipate for him a seat in the gubernatorial chair of state.



*House of the late Judge, situated on the west side of the river.*



the summit level of the Canajoharie and Catskill rail-road route, though by no means on the summit of the grounds in that neighborhood ; for the mountain towers above it on both sides. The Vlaie is situated in a gorge of the mountain, where the sun, at some seasons of the year, sets to the traveler before noon. From the Vlaie issue two streams of water, and what is very remarkable, the one from the north end runs northerly, and, forming the Little Schoharie kill, runs into the Schoharie at the lower end of *clauver-wy* ; while the one from the south end runs southerly, making the head waters of the Catskill. Dams have been erected at both these outlets, and good mill privileges thus obtained. A considerable share of the Vlaie was thus covered with water, and fish having been put into it by the owners, it affords at the present day fine sport for the angler, especially if he is an adept in the art of trolling for pickerel. The name Vlaie now attaches to the pond, which is fed by innumerable never failing springs. This is in truth a remarkable spot. An artificial dam of sufficient strength thrown across each end of the gap, would raise a lake of an hundred or more feet in depth. The county buildings for the accommodation of *paupers*, are pleasantly situated on the west side of the river in this town.

SCHOHARIE, now the largest and wealthiest township in the county, was incorporated March 7th, 1788, as part of Albany county, and is bounded north by Montgomery county, east by Schenectada and Albany counties, south by Middleburgh, and west by Carlisle and Cobelskill. The public buildings, which are constructed of stone, are situated at a village\* on the river flats, bearing the name of the town, in its south-west part ; distant from Albany 33 miles ; from Schenectada 22 ; and from Catskill

\*For a view of Schoharie village see frontispice.

*Description of plate.* In the right hand of the picture is seen the Academy, erected and incorporated in 1835. At the foot of the street in the foreground is the new *Methodist church*. Farther to the left is seen the *Lutheran church* and steeple of the *Dutch church*, between which is the court-house. The public buildings, except the court-house and clerk's office, are of brick ; the two latter of stone. The front of the court-house was fitted up with a *pi-azza* and columns in 1844.

48. This town, like Middleburgh, contains mountainous elevations and broad, fertile interval lands, and was first settled by Germans in 1711. Population 5,532. It has 6 villages, each with a *post-office*, viz—*Schoharie Court House, Esperance, Sloansville, Gallupville, Central Bridge* and *Waldensville*. The ancient stone church, fortified in the Revolution, is still standing, one mile north of the court-house.

*Esperance*, the only incorporated village in the county, is situated in the north-east corner of the town, 8 miles distant from the court-house, and 25 from Albany. It is pleasantly situated on the north side of the river, and has a *Presbyterian* and *Methodist church*, the former of which is a stone edifice, constructed of red sand-stone, from its vicinity, and a classic school. A bridge across the river separates this place from the town of Duanesburg, called formerly *The State Bridge*. This was the second covered bridge erected in the state, the first being built over the Hudson, at Waterford.

SLOANSVILLE, 4 miles west of Esperance (also on the turnpike), and 7 north of the court-house, contains 2 *Baptist churches*. An Indian foot-path, leading from Schoharie to Fort Hunter, passed near Sloansville, a large mound of stones, which had been reared by the Indians long before the whites settled this part of the state. A title to the adjoining lands was called the *Stone Heap Patent*. Tradition says that two Mohawk hunters were passing this place—a quarrel arose between them—one murdered the other—and his fellows, to commemorate the event, erected a pile of stones upon the spot. A custom of their nation required every warrior traveling that path, to appease the departed spirit by adding a stone to the heap, and thus it grew to one of enormous dimensions. Not many years ago the land on which it stood was owned by an individual who cared little for the sacred altars of the red man, and the long accumulating record of homicide was converted by him into stone wall, to the unfeigned regret of *pious antiquarians*. The route pursued by Sir John Johnson and his army, from Schoharie to the Mohawk, in October, 1780, led directly past this *monumental pile*.



GALLUPVILLE, a hamlet romantically situated on Foxes creek, 5 miles from the court-house, has a *Reformed Dutch church* and *classic school*. This place is located on the stage road leading from Schoharie to Albany.

CENTRAL BRIDGE, 5 miles northwest from the court-house, is a small hamlet of recent growth, with a *Lutheran church*, erected in 1844. At this place a bridge crosses the river, called Central Bridge, from its being nearly equidistant from the Esperance and Schoharie bridges.

Waldensville, on Foxes creek in the northeast part of the town, is an unimportant hamlet, with an axe factory, several workshops, &c.

A small *church* owned by the *Methodist* persuasion at Punch Kill, stands within the limits of this town.

*Gebhard's Cavern*, (called formerly Ball's Cave,) ranks conspicuously among the natural curiosities of the county. I have chosen to call it after John Gebhard, jun. Esq., its present proprietor; a gentleman who has done much to advance the science of geology—particularly that branch now denominated palæontology. This cavern is situated upon an elevation called Barton hill, its entrance being in a piece of woods nearly four miles east of the court-house. It was first partially explored in September, 1831. On the 21st of October of the same year, Doctor Joel Foster, Mr. John S. Bonny, John Gebhard, Esq., and several other citizens of Schoharie, having prepared a boat, again visited this cavern, and being let down by ropes with their skiff, they pretty thoroughly explored it. Its entrance, which is funnel shaped, is some 12 feet across, and when first visited was literally covered with fallen timber, a part of which had been cast into the aperture to prevent domestic animals from falling in.

This cavern is situated in the midst of a forest, and ingress to its dark chambers is down a natural chimney of 70 feet depth, through massive lime rock, with nearly perpendicular sides. The chimney is now supplied with a substantial ladder, the foot of which rests upon timber and earth, which have accumulated in the lapse of time to several feet in depth. From the foot of the

ladder, the principal direction of the cavern is southwest ; and the visiter after descending some 30 feet more by a craggy footing and a second ladder, arrives at a passage some 10 feet wide, and for a little distance not over three feet high.

On the right of this passage, which is nearly 30 feet long with an arch of nature's masonry, a stream of pure water issues from an opening three feet wide and fifteen inches high. A small boat having been constructed for the purpose and called after its projector the *Bonny Boat*, Mr. Bonny in one of his early visits explored this part of the cavern. In a recumbent posture he was pushed off in his tiny craft with torch in hand into the dark hole, which soon enlarged to respectable dimensions, so that he could stand up and propel it : this he did by taking hold of projections of the rock. He discovered nothing very peculiar in this passage, which led in a northerly course, except that its limpid water was obstructed by fourteen natural dams, in themselves a curiosity of no little interest. They were located where the passage was 8 or 10 feet wide and about as high, with a depth of water between them ranging from 10 to 30 feet ; and consisted of tufaceous formations resembling sections of a circle, the curve in each dam being towards the outlet of the lake, or sluggish stream. Those dams, which rose several inches above the level of the water below them, and over which the stream gently rippled, were about four inches in thickness on the top, upon which the fearless navigator had to stand astride his boat, and push it into the lake upon its opposite side.

This part of the cavern, which has been denominated *passage of the dams*, terminates in a large room nearly fifty feet square, the walls of which are graywacke, and hang in threatening confusion on every side. As the characteristic rock of the mountain is here changed, it affords the visitor no geological specimens of interest ; and as this passage is explored with much hazard, few will ever see it. The last time Mr. Bonny visited the *dams*, (in 1835,) the writer launched his craft and awaited with anxiety, at the entrance, his return. Mr. B. then gave this part of the cavern a satisfactory examination, and observed that many frag-

ments of rock had fallen in the square room since his first visit; and supposed that tons more might be dislodged by the discharge of a musket. He came near losing his balance while standing upon a dam and pushing over the then water-soaked boat, and on making his egress, expressed his gratitude for having, as he believed, barely escaped a watery grave; for had he lost his light, and with it his boat, he could hardly have found his way, by swimming in such cold water nearly *one quarter of a mile* to the place of entrance.

On the south side of the main passage leading from the entrance, at a little distance from the outlet of the lake, obstructed by dams, is an opening scarcely large enough to admit a grown person, which leads into a room some ten feet in diameter, called the *Fox room*; its early visitors having found within it animal bones, supposed to have been those of a fox. The sound of hammer strokes upon the wall or floor of this room give evidence of a cavity beyond, into which a passage could easily be opened with proper implements.

Following the rippling stream in the main passage, it leads to the shore of a lake nearly 400 feet in length. This sheet of transparent water, buried about 100 feet beneath the earth's surface, and on which the zephyr breeze has never cast a ripple, is, with two or three exceptions, not over 8 or 10 feet wide, averaging in depth from 6 to 30 feet. In some places, the arched lime-rock rises above the head of the young mariner 20 or 30 feet, while in others he is compelled to adopt Franklin's maxim, and *stoop to avoid a thump*.

The lake terminates at its southwest end in an enlargement of the passage, and climbing up a steep ascent of ~~whor~~ 12 feet, a small aperture leads into an intelligent young man called from its circular form, the *rotunda*. This room is 315 feet in circumference, with a vaulted roof and concave floor, separated in the centre by a space of some 40 feet. A single candle reflects but a sickle: in this dungeon of nature, but the writer once visited it was some thirty other individuals were there on the same errand, and the light of thirty torches discovered the magnificence of the

apartment. The only living inhabitants of this cavern are *bats*, which hang suspended to each other from the walls, by bringing into requisition the little hooks on their wings, and resemble bees at rest in a hive. Trout would, no doubt, live in the cold, clear waters of this everlasting dungeon.

From the rotunda is a low narrow passage running in a south-east direction several hundred feet, in no part of which can the visitant stand upright. On the north side of the rotunda, an opening leads into a small room denominated, from musical sounds sometimes heard in it, the *Music Saloon*. A few years ago this cavern was purchased by John Gebhard, jr. and Mr. Bonny, who opened a passage in the clay and sand which constitute the floors, from the music room into several other small apartments in that vicinity; and it is highly probable that similar excavations would disclose other hidden recesses. In fact, a few hours' labor would doubtless open a passage through the floor in one part of the rotunda, beneath which the outlet of the lake can be heard descending to a lower level, and thus disclose to the visitor new attractions—new wonders.

Tons of rare minerals have been removed from the several rooms of this cavern, to adorn the cabinets of practical geologists. Stalactites and stalagmites, of semi-transparent *alabaster*, white as Alpine snow, and of every seeming variety of shape, have been taken from this *laboratory*. Minerals depending from the ceilings, or attached to the walls and floors, were removed by the early visitors, but many of the richest specimens have been discovered at a later period, by digging in the earthy floors. Some of the *stalactites* of alabaster, which have been formed in the lapse of ages, <sup>which</sup> are gray with of water through the fissures of lime-rock, and its escape the characteristic <sup>of</sup> *stalactites*, thus leaving its imbibed sedimentary deposit of carbonate of lime on the floors of this cavern are found to contain geodes filled with beautiful *floss*-will ever thread-like crystals. The *satin spar* is only rivalled by <sup>that</sup> of Derbyshire, England, while the *brown calcarious spars* and *arragonite* are rarely equalled in beauty by those of any other cavern.

A specimen weighing several hundred pounds now adorns the valuable cabinet of John Gebhard, Esq., which was removed by immense labor from the music saloon, and drawn to the surface by a windlass. It is a mass of pure white alabaster, which has incorporated in its formation several stalagmites, and projecting from a part of which are forty-one distinct stalactites of various sizes, pointing, like so many magnets, to the centre of all gravity. Another specimen which was excavated in this part of the cavern, deserves especial notice. It is a female bust, or rather breast, of purest alabaster; the contour is French, and approximates surprisingly to nature, on which account it is one of the most valuable of all stalagmitic formations—for it is a form which may be admired without the fear of its imbibing *false pride*, or blushing at the exposure of its own *charming proportions*.

Gebhard's cavern has a merited celebrity on account of its secluded locality, its limpid lakes, its rotunda, its salubrious atmosphere, and the immense quantity of beautiful minerals it has afforded the admirer of Nature's handiwork; not a few of which, for their snowy whiteness, are scarcely equalled by those of any other cavern in this country: and it will continue to have numerous visitors, although other caves, *dark and deep*, may become justly celebrated in its neighborhood. For as a previous writer observes—"The novelty of navigating a crystal lake by torch light, beneath an arch of massive rock, at the distance of some hundred feet from the surface of the earth—the breathless excitement resulting from the real and imaginary dangers of the enterprise, &c., are themselves sufficient to render this cavern a place of frequent and interesting resort."

Several females have explored it, the first of whom was Miss Wayland, a spirited and intelligent young lady from New York city. The interior of all caverns is ever damp—ever dirty; and those who would visit this or any other, and explore its or their extent, must go provided with a suit of once rejected apparel: in other words, they must increase the novelty of their visit by gazing on curious objects in the most ludicrous figure they can possibly present—which is that of disguising their persons in the cast-



off clothing of somebody's grand-parents. *Col. Stone*, speaking of Miss Wayland's preparation to enter this cavern, said "*she had prepared herself at the village with a garb which would have appeared well in the beggar's opera.*"

A clever romance of the Mohawk, written a few years since by Hoffman, and given the name of *Greyclaer*, (a name which sounds too much like that of certain tory leaders, mentioned in this volume, to please the writer,) locates some scenes of it in this cavern, to which he applies the very pretty Indian name of *Wane-onda*. It is not probable, however, that any Indian ever entered, noticed, or named it. The charming Alida de Roos, its heroine, the reader may almost fancy personified in the person of Miss Wayland, who is doubtless quite as pretty.

OTSGARAGEE CAVERN, known in its vicinity as Howe's cave, and called by G. F. Yates, Esq., (an antiquarian and naturalist, who was one of its earliest visitors, and first to describe it), *The Great Gallery Cave*, is situated on the farm of Henry Wetsel, in the extreme northwest corner of this town, about three and a half miles from Central Bridge, and five from the Court House. It was first explored by Lester Howe, its present proprietor, in the month of May, 1842. The entrance is in the side of a mountain ridge of limestone, on the west side of the Cobelskill, not far distant from, but elevated some fifty feet above that stream. From the entrance, which is very easy of access, its principal direction is nearly west, leading off under the town of Cobelskill.

A visit to several spacious rooms in this cave, is made with comparative ease, and little or no danger; one of which, situated some distance from the entrance, is very properly called the *Chapel*, in a published notice of it. This apartment, which crosses the principal direction of the passage, somewhat resembles in shape the hull of a ship bottom upwards, in an inclined position, the floor at one end being elevated above the other, and is some sixty or seventy feet in length by about twenty in breadth, with a vaulted roof separated from the floor by a space of twenty or thirty feet. Near the upper end of this room is a *stalactite* which will weigh several hundred pounds, and beneath it a *stalagmite* of corres-

ponding dimensions. They are ash-colored, of interesting form, and far more valuable where they are, than they would be in any other place, as they may, in fancy, be considered the *desk* of the Chapel.

From the room just described, the visitor, whose curiosity leads him farther, is obliged to pass through a place called the tunnel, nearly two hundred feet in length, so contracted as to compel him either to creep on *all fours*, or prostrate, and worm himself along upon a plank placed for his convenience, where the cavities of the floor are filled with water, which plank are of course constantly wet. Threading this passage, in some parts of which he cannot turn round if he would, the visitor will feel awe-stricken, and, if he never has before, will realize to some extent the consciousness of his own weakness and ability of

That *Spirit-power* the earth we tread now quakes,  
And closing old, new mountain-caverns makes;  
Which bids the clouds send down their timely rain,  
And whistling winds go drink it up again.

This narrow passage conducts into a room in which a boat is required to cross a small sheet of limpid water, which is thirty feet long, twenty wide, and ten deep, over which Charon ferries his friends.

From *the lake* the main passage of the cavern extends a great distance, much of the way following the meanderings of a brook, the passage being sufficiently large to permit visitors to proceed with no other inconvenience than their exposure to wet feet. Several extensive rooms are met with in the back part of the cavern, which contain formations of a novel character; and in one of its secret passages is heard the thundering of a cataract, where a stream of water dashes down unobserved into caverns far below. The passages of this cavern, large and small, extend several miles from its entrance, and disclose to the visitor many interesting peculiarities; and that persons may not travel great distances to visit it and go home disappointed, as several have, who expected to explore "*The rival of the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky*," I am constrained to observe that several accounts have

exaggerated its true picture. To say nothing of a lake within it, in which subsist fish *that have no visible organs of sight*, "The Mammoth Cave in Kentucky," says James K. Paulding, "is the largest cavern in the known world, having either *thirty* or *thirty-two* avenues radiating from the area within the entrance, each one extending to the distance of *ten miles* under the earth. A man, therefore, in going and returning through these avenues, would cover a distance of *upwards of six hundred miles*." There are acres of ground in single rooms in this great cavern, while much of the Schoharie cave under consideration, consists in narrow passages, not to be explored without some difficulty, and the hazard of receiving a sponged coat and muddy boots.

Far inland, this cave abounds in mineral deposits, peculiar to caverns in limestone, such as calcarious spar, arragonite of various colors, and alabaster in stalactical and other forms; few of which as yet taken out will compare, however, in pearly and snowy whiteness, with similar formations found in Gebhard's Cave. Some of the dangerous looking *holes* in Cobelskill and Carlisle, may possibly be found to communicate with Howe's Cavern. The proprietor is making praiseworthy efforts to open a passage round the *tunnel* to the *lake*, which, if successful, will obviate the greatest difficulty now met with in satisfactorily exploring this cave, and it will then be visited by numerous guests.

*Nethaway's Cave*, situated on the farm of Peter Nethaway, two miles south-west of the court-house, was explored in 1836 by John Gebhard Esq., and Mr. Bonny. It afforded nothing worth removing, save a few choice cabinet specimens of colored rhombohedral spar, which resembles the most inviting maple sugar.

In addition to the rich minerals found in its caverns, this town affords several others of beauty and interest. *Sulphate of strontian*, an exceedingly rare mineral, is found in two localities: one in a vein between layers of rock at the Karighondontee mountain, about three miles northwest, and another one-fourth of a mile southeast of the court-house. This mineral receives a fine polish, and resembles marble in its appearance, but is easily de-

terminated by its specific gravity, which is much heavier than that of marble. *Carbonate of strontian*, almost as rare a mineral, is also found at the last mentioned locality.

A mine of *iron pyrites*, to appearance exhaustless, is situated on the west bank of the river, one mile southwest of the court-house. Some of its crystalizations are very beautiful; but the mineral is of no great value. A German chemist, named John Casper Staudt, is said to have made small quantities of copperas at this place during the Revolution. In fact, he acquired the reputation of making *contraband* coppers also, which are said to have passed more currently than continental paper.

On the south bank of Foxes creek, one mile east of the court-house, is a locality of *clay-stones*. They are small, regular formations of indurated clay, and present the appearance of having been turned in a lathe. They are washed out at every freshet from a steep bank, at a depth of at least ten feet below the surface. They are valueless, but in themselves a matter of no little curiosity.

*Fluate of lime* or *fluor spar*, is found in small quantities in seams of the lime-rock, half a mile southeast of the court-house. In its vicinity also occurs a strata of *water limestone*, which Professor Beck analyzed with the following result :

Carbonate of Lime,.....	56.25
Carbonate of Magnesia,.....	30.75
Silica and Alumina,.....	11.50
Oxide of Iron,.....	1.50
	<hr/>
	100.000

*Calcareous tufa* is found in several localities along the west side of the river. In it are beautiful specimens of *fossil moss*; the incrustations of limy matter being so delicate as to preserve every fibre of the once living moss; while other portions, finding the former bed a fertilizer, grow upon its top, presenting the phenomena of white and green in the same cluster. A specimen analyzed by Professor Beck, gave the following result :

Carbonate of Lime,.....	97.25
Organic matter,.....	1.95
Silica, .....	.80
	<hr/>
	100.000

On the walls of the old stone church, are cut the names of most of the individuals who aided in its erection. In the graveyard near it is the following monumental inscription :

“ In memory of Col. Peter Vrooman, who departed this life December 29th, 1793, aged fifty-seven years, nine months, and nine days.”

SEWARD, erected from Sharon February 11th, 1840, is distant from the Court House 15 miles, and from Albany 48. It is bounded north by Sharon, east by Cobelskill, south and west by Otsego county ; and was named after His Excellency, William H. Seward, then Governor of the State. This town has 4 churches—1 *Methodist*, 2 *Lutheran*, and 1 *Baptist* ; and 2 *post offices*, called *Hyndsville*, and *Gardnersville*.

The local settlement called New Dorlach, after a town in Germany from whence its citizens came, was made in this town in 1754, by Sebastian France, Michael Merckley, Henry Hynds, and Ernest Fretz, who landed at New York in the fall of 1753, proceeded to Albany in the winter, and the following spring began their pioneer residence. These settlers had part of their early milling done at Schenectada.

The north part of Seward has a supply of limestone. A spur of the Catsbergs runs along the south side of West creek. On the north side of that stream, situated between Hyndsville and Lawyerville, is a hill, called on the early maps by the Indian name of *Gogng-ta-nee*. The following inscription may be seen in the burying ground of the Methodist Church, near Hyndsville :

“ In memory of Horace Handy, who died Sept. 11, 1834, in the 22d year of his age. H. H. was a graduate of Union College, a member and benefactor of the Adelphi Society, by whose order this was erected.”

SHARON, centrally distant northwest from the Court House 18 miles, and from Albany 45, is bounded north by Montgomery county, east by Carlisle, south by Seward, and west by Otsego county. This town was so called after Sharon in Connecticut. Being underlaid with limestone, it has numerous caverns, few, if any of which, have yet been explored. The rock contains



numerous *fossils*, among which I have procured good specimens of *branch coral*. Sharon has 4 *post offices*—*Sharon, Leesville, Argusville*, and *Sharon Centre* (the last mentioned being nearest the *Sharon Springs*); and 4 *churches*—1 *Reformed Dutch*, 1 *Methodist*, 1 *Baptist*, and 1 owned by the *Lutherans* and *Baptists*.

In a ravine nearly a mile north of the turnpike, two miles from the Sharon Centre post office, and about the same distance from Leesville, are the *Sharon Sulphur Springs*—mineral waters—said to be similar in properties to the celebrated springs of Virginia. The principal spring boils up from the bed of a small brook, discharging a column of water which must ever supply an abundance for medicinal purposes.

An analysis, made by Dr. Chilton, of New York, of water from this spring, gives the following result :

	Grains.
Sulphate of Magnesia, . . . . .	42.40
do Lime, . . . . .	111.62
Chloride of Sodium, . . . . .	2.24
do Magnesium, . . . . .	2.40
Hydro-sulphuret of Sodium, }	2.28
do Calcium, }	
<hr/>	
Total number of grains,	160.94
Sulphuretted Hydrogen Gas, 16 cubic inches.	

Besides this, there are several smaller springs of like efficacy near, and, as stated by Dr. Beck, a *chalybeate* spring in the same neighborhood. The waters of the first mentioned spring are highly impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen—indeed, to such a degree as to tarnish silver, even in the pocket of the visiter. There is a pretty *cascade*, about a quarter of a mile distant from the shower house, to lure the lover of romance, while around the springs *fossil leaves* and *moss* are easily obtained in great perfection by geologists.

*Anhydrous sulphate of lime*, an exceedingly rare mineral, is found in a little *cave* near the principal spring at this place. It is a remarkable fact, that while crystals are decomposing on one side of a mass of this mineral, they are often forming on the opposite side.

The waters of the Sharon Springs have obtained great celebrity for the last twenty years, for their beneficial effects on rheumatic, cutaneous, and other diseases ; and a public house was long since erected near the principal spring. The PAVILION, a magnificent hotel, reared by a company of gentlemen from New York, in 1836, on an adjoining eminence, for the better accommodation of visitors, is now fitted up in elegant style, and under the direction of its present proprietors, Messrs. Gardner & Landon, is well



SHARON SPRINGS PAVILION.

patronized by invalids, who would know the efficacy of the mineral waters, and fashionable tourists, who would seek a summer residence where novel and picturesque scenery, and a most salubrious atmosphere cannot fail to invite them.

The Pavilion is situated on the borders of Schoharie, Montgomery, and Otsego counties, about 45 miles west from Albany, 20 northwest from Schoharie Court House, and 8 east from

Cherry Valley. Visitors who would approach the Springs from the valley of the Mohawk, will find carriages running daily, in the summer season, from Canajoharie, nine miles distant, for their accommodation.

SUMMIT,\* erected April 13, 1819, from Cobelskill and Jefferson, is distant southwest from the Court House 20 miles, from Albany 50, and from Catskill 55. It is bounded north by Cobelskill, east by Fulton, south by Jefferson and Delaware county, and west by Otsego county. It began to be settled about ten years after the close of the Revolution, by men from New England, whose descendants are engaged in the dairy business. Population 2,009. The prevailing rock is slate. Summit has 7 churches—3 *Methodist*, 2 *Baptist*, 1 *Lutheran*, and 1 *Christian*; and 2 post offices—*Summit 4 Corners* and *Charlottesville*. Summit Pond, a small, placid sheet of water, near the corners in this town, covers some sixty acres of land.—*J. W. Baird*.

\*On the borders of this town is a small lake, bearing the soft Indian name *Ut-say-an-tho*. It is known in the neighborhood as Jack's lake, so called after the late John A. Hudson, who owned lands around it—Jack being our national vulgarity for John. This sheet of water, which affords one of the sources of the Susquehanna, owes its poetic name, as tradition says, to the following circumstance: *Utsayantho*, a beautiful Indian maiden, gave birth to an illegitimate child on its romantic shore, and a council of chiefs having been called to deliberate on its fate, they decided to drown it in the lake, and did so; since which it has been known by the name of the unhappy mother.—*E. B. Bigelow, Jr.*

## CHAPTER XXI.

While water is running from mountain to plain,  
 And our star-spangled banner floats over the main ;  
 When myrtle and laurel in green life are drest,  
 We 'll cherish thy mem'ry, *brave captors* at rest.  
 But the acts of a *knave*, a *traitor*—*ingrate*,  
 Must kindle forever our deadliest hate ;  
 Shall invoke through all time, *base Arnold*, on thee,  
 The withering curse of the virtuous and free.

To *R. W. Murphy, Esq.* of Preston Hollow, a nephew of *David Williams*, would the author acknowledge his indebtedness for several interesting incidents in the life of the latter.

The captor Williams was a son of After and Phebe Williams, who emigrated from Holland in early life. They were poor but reputable : he died near the close of the Revolution, and the widow died at the residence of her son David, in 1795. The following biography of David Williams appeared in the Albany Daily Advertiser in January preceding his death, said to have been dictated by himself.

“ I was born in Tarrytown, then called Philips' Manor, Westchester county, New-York, October 21st, 1754. I entered the army in 1775, at the age of 21, and was under Gen. Montgomery at the siege of Fort St. Johns, and afterwards on board the flat bottomed boats to carry provisions, &c.; served out my time which was six months. I then went, listed again in the spring of 1776, and continued in the service by different enlistments as a New-York militiaman until 1779.

In 1778, when in Capt. Acker's company of New-York militia at Tarrytown, I asked his permission to take a walk in company with William Van Wart, a boy sixteen or seventeen years old. I proceeded to the cross-roads on Tompkins' ridge, stood looking a few minutes, saw five men coming, they had arms ; we jumped

over a stone fence and concealed ourselves in a corner of it; observed that they were armed with two muskets and three pistols. They came so nigh that we recognised two of them, viz. William Underhill and William Mosher, who were tories, and known to be of De Lancey's corps. When they came within proper distance, I said to my companion, 'Billy, neck or no joint!' I then said aloud, as if speaking to a number, with the view of intimidating them, 'men *make ready*!' They stopped immediately; I told them to ground their arms, which they did; I then said, 'march away;' they did so; I then jumped over the fence, secured their arms, and made them march before us to our quarters. I continued in the service until a week or ten days before the year 1780. In December, 1779, Captain Daniel Williams, who was commander of our company, mounted us on horses and we went to Morrisiana, Westchester county. We swept all Morrisiana clear; took probably \$5,000 worth of property, returned to Tarrytown, and quartered at Young's house. My feet being frozen, my uncle Martinus Van Wart took me to his house. I told Capt. Williams that the enemy would soon be at Young's, and that if he remained there he would be on his way to Morrisiana before morning. He paid no attention to my remarks—he did not believe me; but in the course of the night a woman came to my uncle's crying 'Uncle Martinus! Uncle Martinus!' The truth was the British had surrounded Young's house, made prisoners of all the company except two, and burnt the barn.

"Having got well of my frozen feet, on the third of June, 1780, we were all driven from Tarrytown to the upper part of Westchester county, in the town of Salem. We belonged to no organised company at all; were under no command, and worked for our board or *johnny-cake*. Isaac Van Wart, who was a cousin of mine, [the father of Williams and mother of Van Wart were brother and sister,] Nicholas Storms and myself went to Tarrytown on a visit; we carried our muskets with us, and on our way took a Quaker who said he was going to New-York after salt and other things. The Quaker was taken before the American authority and acquitted.

"In July or August a number of persons of whom I was one, went on a visit to our friends in Tarrytown, and while on the way took ten head of cattle which some refugees were driving to New-York, and on examination before the authority, the cattle were restored to their right owners, as they pleaded innocence saying they were stolen from them. I then returned to Salem and worked with a Mr. Benedict for my board until the 22d of September. It was about one o'clock, P. M., as I was standing in the door with Mr. Benedict's daughter, (who was afterwards my wife), when I saw six men coming; she remarked 'they have got guns.' I jumped over a board fence and met them. 'Boys,' said I, 'where are you going?' they answered 'we are going to Tarrytown.' I then said 'if you will wait until I get my gun I will go with you.'



The names of the six persons were Isaac Van Wart, John Paulding, William Williams, John Yerks, and James Romer; the name of the sixth I have forgotten. We proceeded about fifteen miles that night, and slept in a hay barrack. In the morning we crossed Buttermilk hill, when John Paulding proposed to go to Isaac Reed's and get a pack of cards to divert ourselves with. After procuring them we went out to Davis' hill, where we separated; leaving four on the hill, and three, viz. Van Wart, Paulding and myself proceeded on the Tarrytown road about one mile and concealed ourselves in the bushes on the west side of the road, and commenced playing cards three handed, that is each one for himself. We had not been playing more than an hour, when we heard a horse galloping across a bridge but a few yards from us; which of us spoke I do not remember, but one of us said, 'there come as trader going to New-York.' We stepped out from our concealment and stopped him. 'My lads,' said he, 'I hope you belong to our party.' We asked him 'what party?' he replied 'the lower party.' We told him 'we did.' He then said 'I am a British officer, have been up the country on particular business, and would not wish to be detained a minute,' and as a token to convince us he was a gentleman, he pulled out and shewed us his gold watch; we then told him we were Americans. 'God bless my soul,' said he, 'a man must do any thing these times to get along;' and then shewed us Arnold's pass. We told him it would not satisfy us without searching him. 'My lads,' said he, 'you will bring yourselves into trouble.' We answered, we did not fear it, and conducted him about seventy rods into the woods. My comrades appointed me to search him; commencing with his hat, I searched his person effectually, but found nothing until I pulled off his boot, when we discovered that something was concealed in his stocking. Paulding caught hold of his foot and exclaimed, 'By G-d here it is!' I pulled off his stocking, and inside of it next to the sole of his foot, found three half sheets of paper enclosed in another half sheet which was endorsed 'West Point;' and on pulling off the other boot and stocking, I found three like papers, enclosed and endorsed as the others. On reading them one of my companions said, 'By G-d he is a *spy*!' We then asked him where he got those papers: he told us 'of a man at Pine's bridge,' but he said 'he did not know his name.' He offered us his gold watch, his horse, saddle, bridle and 100 guineas if we would let him go; we told him 'no, unless he would inform us where he got the papers.' He answered us as before, but increased his offer to 1000 guineas, his horse, &c.: we told him again we would not let him go; he then said 'gentlemen, I will give you 10,000 guineas [nearly \$50,000], and as many dry goods as you will ask; conceal me in any place of safety while you can send to New-York with an order to Sir Henry Clinton from me, and the goods and money will be procured so that you can get them unmolested.' [Paulding then told him, as he stated on the trial of Joshua H. Smith a few days after the arrest,]

'no, by G-d, if you would give us ten thousand guineas you should not stir a step; we are Americans, and above corruption, and go with us you must.' We then took him about twelve miles to Col. Jamieson's quarters at North Castle."

Andre was about five feet eight inches high, with black eyes, a bold military countenance, and was a good looking, though rather small, trim-built man.

The father of David Williams was a farmer in Tarrytown at the beginning of the war, who, being too poor to purchase a farm, worked land upon shares. When the British and tories began to commit acts of cruelty in the vicinity, Williams removed with his family into the town of South Salem. He lived on lands belonging to Joseph Benedict Esq., near the village of Cross River. The Americans having possession of the country in the vicinity of West Point, and the British that above New York, tories about the neutral ground, from their acts of cruelty, such as murder, theft, rapine, and the like, received from the whigs the title of *cow-boys*. These despoilers of Whig property, whose visits were generally made in the night, frequently drove off cattle, horses, swine, &c., to the British posts, where they were liberally rewarded for the stolen property of their neighbors. In consequence of the tories stealing so many cattle in the vicinity of the British army, they were called *cow-boys* by the patriots,—a term implying at that period the very lowest calling in life. De Lancy's corps, which became a *terror to well doers*, from their being generally mounted on horseback, was chiefly formed from cow-boys.

On the removal of the Williams family to Cross River, David hired out to Mr. Benedict to work on his farm, and became so much of a favorite with the family, that, whenever he was not engaged in military service, he made the house of his employer his welcome-home. Mr. Benedict had a fair daughter named Nancy, and Cupid had so interwoven the affections of the young couple, it is not surprising that David found his time pass agreeably at her father's. The whigs who encountered the cow-boys in their excursions into the country, were generally in the militia service on short enlistments, and as they had been obliged

in many instances to change their residences, they acquired the name of *refugees*, a title sometimes given the tories. The cow-boys were often overtaken or intercepted, and the plunder they had made taken from them by the refugees, almost within sight of the British camp. Not unfrequently the aggressor's life was forfeited on these occasions, and now and then a conflict ensued, when the life-blood of friend and foe mingled together.

In the fall of 1780, at a time when Williams was at the house of Mr. Benedict, enjoying an agreeable *tete-a-tete* with his Nancy, she pointed out to him a small company of armed men approaching their village. They entered an inn near by, and the lover, having recognized them, stole a parting kiss from his fair one, and hastened to join them. The names of the party are given in the preceding statement of Williams. The night before, a party of cow-boys had been into the adjoining town of Poundridge, led on by one Smith, a noted tory, and besides stealing much property, they had killed a neighbor to some of the whigs then convened, by the name of Pelham, who had run out in his night-clothes to save his horses. To reclaim the stolen property and return it to the widow, or avenge the death of her husband, was the especial object this scout of American militia had in view, when they set out for Tarrytown; true, some of them hoped also to see several relatives.

Williams and his companions kept together until they reached Tarrytown, when they separated; the former, with Paulding and his cousin Van Wart, taking the east road, and the other four the west road, leading to New York. At an angle of the road, Williams and his associates concealed themselves, obtaining a north and west view of it for some distance. The approach of Andre, his arrest, &c., is inserted as related by Williams. Meeting the three armed men below the American pickets, Andre took them to be cow-boys, and being thrown off his guard, his manner excited suspicion in his captors, and he was strictly searched. His *pass* from Arnold, which had protected "*John Anderson*" thus far, would protect *John Andre* no farther. While in the act of exhibiting his *pass*, he stated that he "was going below on an ex-

press from the head quarters of the American army at West Point, and here," he added, "is a pass from Gen. Arnold, who commands in the absence of Gen Washington." *The pass*, which was dated *Head Quarters, Robinson house, September 22d, 1780*, required all persons to assist John Anderson, who was going to New York on business highly important to the American army, forbidding any person to stop or molest him at their peril. Knowing that Washington had gone to Hartford on business, after the pass from Arnold was produced, his captors had nearly allowed him to proceed, and he was reinng his horse into the road, when Paulding in an under tone observed, "*D——n him, I do not like his looks!*" It is stated in the *Life of Gen. Greene*, who was president of the board which tried Andre, that when he first became visible to his captors he was engaged in examining a sketch of the route, to determine which of the several roads he ought to pursue.



PLACE WHERE ANDRE WAS CAPTURED.

At the expression of Paulding that he did not like his looks, he was again ordered to stop. One of the party enquired what he had done with the paper he had in his hands when he first appeared in sight. The question produced a momentary hesitation, and his embarrassment being noticed by the party, he was then told that the circumstances of his first avowing himself to belong



to the *lower party*—his having an undress British coat under his surtout, in connection with Arnold's pass—required their searching his person, to which he firmly remonstrated, threatening them with the vengeance of Arnold for detaining him. But his threats were of no avail; his manner increased their suspicions; the love of *liberty* fired the patriotic heart, and leading his horse aside into a field partially covered with underwood, he was examined. His person was strictly searched—his hat, coat, vest, shirt and breeches—even his hair, which was done up in a cue, the fashion of the day, was untied without creating any unusual anxiety in the prisoner, until he was ordered to take off his boots, when he changed color, and fear was manifested in his countenance. As he did not feel disposed to remove them, Williams, who had been selected by his companions to search him, while they retained their arms, drew them off, and inside his stockings, next his bare feet, the treasonable papers were found: in one boot was also discovered the sketch of the route. He had upon his person eighty dollars, continental money. Finding his true character disclosed, and being told that he was considered as a *spy*, Andre saw at once the danger of his situation, and attempted to regain his liberty by the offer of bribes, such as required Roman firmness—I should say *American* firmness, for Roman history exhibits no parallel—to resist. But the attempt was futile, evincing in his captors a love of liberty stronger than love of riches and virtue that kings might envy.

While they were searching Andre, his horse had strayed some distance, grazing among the under-brush; when the search was completed, one of them led up the horse and he was permitted to mount and ride between his captors, to the military post, commanded by Lieut. Col. Jamieson. At the examination of Andre at Tappan, and also at his trial at the same place, the captors were present. While at West Point, the magnanimous Washington took the three intrepid soldiers into the arsenal, and presented each of them a sword and brace of pistols, telling them to go constantly armed—"that they would be hunted like partridges upon the mountains"—offering at the same time, that if they



chose to remain in the army, he would give to each of them a captain's commission. They all declined promotion, and returned to their friends; and as Williams was, I have no doubt they all were narrowly watched by the tories.

On one occasion, while at his father's, Williams came near being taken. The house was surrounded in the night by a party of cow-boys, but their cowardice in making the attack was probably the only circumstance to which he owed his life. At another time Williams, having spent the evening with his intended, was returning home from her father's in the night, was waylaid in a by-place, and a man, stepping from his concealment, exclaimed, "*Stand, you d——d rebel!*" Williams drew a pistol and fired upon his nocturnal intruder, who vacated the path and retreated into the bushes. The next day the course of his assailant could be traced some distance by the drops of blood. Thus one of the pistols presented by Washington prevented his falling into the hands of his enemies, if it did not in fact save his life.

The following singular coincidence is related at the particular request of the widow of David Williams, and may be relied upon as strictly true. The father of David, a short time before the capture of Andre, had the following singular dream: He saw a crow alight in his path, having in its beak a folded paper. He was extremely anxious to obtain the paper, and see what it contained. For some time he followed after the bird, which would repeatedly fly up and again alight in his path. His anxiety to obtain the paper increasing, he threw his hat at the bird, which then dropped it. He snatched it up, and eagerly unfolding, found it a blank sheet of paper, containing in one end a piece of gold, and in the other a piece of silver. A few days after, he heard of Andre's arrest, and that his son was one of the captors. Diviners of dreams are at liberty to make out of this what they please. They can, if they choose, liken the bird to the dark spirit which was besetting the path of Andre; the paper to the pass of Arnold; the gold to the bribe offered by the prisoner for his release; and the silver to the reward granted the captors by act of Congress.

The following extract of a letter from Gen. Washington to the

president of Congress, dated "Robinson's house, in the Highlands, September 26, 1780," will show the manner in which that body was apprized of Arnold's treason and Andre's arrest :

"I do not know the party that took Maj. Andre, but it is said that it consisted only of a few militia, who acted in such a manner upon the occasion as does them the highest honor, and proves them to be men of great virtue. As soon as I know their names I shall take pleasure in transmitting them to Congress."

Washington communicated to the president of Congress the names of Andre's captors, as the following extract of a letter, dated "Paramus, October 7, 1780," will show :

"I have now the pleasure to communicate the names of the three persons who captured Maj. Andre, and who refused to release him, notwithstanding the most earnest importunities, and assurances of a liberal reward, on his part. The names are *John Paulding, David Williams, and Isaac Van Wart.*" [They were presented to Gen. Washington by Col. Hamilton.]

The following is a resolution of Congress, adopted Nov. 3d, 1780 :

"Whereas Congress have received information that John Paulding, David Williams and Isaac Van Wart, three young volunteer militiamen of the State of New York, did, on the 23d day of September last, intercept Maj. John Andre, Adjutant General of the British Army, on his return from the American lines in the Character of a Spy ; and notwithstanding the large bribes offered them for his release, nobly disdaining to sacrifice their Country for the sake of Gold, secured and conveyed him to the Commanding officer of the district, whereby the dangerous and traitorous conspiracy of Benedict Arnold was brought to light, the insidious designs of the Enemy baffled, and the United States secured from impending danger : *Resolved*, That Congress have a high sense of the virtuous and patriotic conduct of the said *John Paulding, David Williams* and *Isaac Van Wart* : In testimony whereof, *Ordered*, That each of them receive annually, out of the Public Treasury, *Two Hundred Dollars* in specie, or an equivalent in current money, of these States, during life, and that the Board of War procure for each of them a silver Medal, on one side of which shall be a shield with this inscription, "Fidelity"—and on the other the following motto, "Vincit Amor Patriæ"—and forward them to the Commander-in-Chief, who is requested to present the same, with a copy of this Resolution, and the thanks of Congress for their Fidelity, and the eminent service they have rendered their Country."

In addition to the medal and yearly annuity, Congress granted

to each of the captors the privilege of locating any confiscated lands in the county of Westchester, to the value of \$1250, or of receiving the said sum in cash, to be expended as they chose. About this time, Williams married Miss Benedict, who was several years younger than himself, and with the \$1250 granted by Congress, bought a part of the farm owned by his father-in-law and settled upon it, erecting a *log cabin* to live in.

The medal, which is now treasured as a sacred relic by Mrs. Williams, is about as large again as a silver dollar. On one side is represented the United States coat of arms, bearing the simple inscription, "*Fidelity.*" On the other side is inscribed the Latin sentence, "*Vincit Amor Patriæ*"—the love of country conquers. At the time of Andre's arrest, Williams was older than either of his comrades. It may be said of him, that his charity knew no bounds. He was liberal even to a fault; and the sin of selfishness was one of the least for which he had to render a final account. He was most esteemed and respected by those who knew him best, which is ever the surest test of merit. Naturally honest and confiding, he believed others to be so, and therefore was liable to be plundered by the knavish. He was by habit an early riser, and very industrious. His early education, like that of many others who fought under the stars of liberty, was limited; but being fond of reading, he acquired before his death a good fund of general information. He collected some valuable books which he repeatedly read through, *and not only took a newspaper and paid for it, but he read its contents.* In principle, he was a warm republican. Liberal in his religious views, he never was heard extolling one denomination and denouncing another; and although he made no public profession of religion, he regularly attended divine worship when held in his neighborhood, frequently opening his own house for that purpose. In the latter part of his life, he often read the scriptures aloud in his family, and not unfrequently he was seen or over-heard engaged in secret devotion.

In the fall of 1830, the Corporation of the city of New York sent an invitation, by a special messenger, to Mr. Williams, to be

present as a guest at the celebration of the French Revolution. He was, with Enoch Crosby, another hero of '76, and two others, drawn in an elegant carriage at the head of the procession, attracting much attention, as the writer well remembers. While in the city, he visited with the mayor and other distinguished citizens, theatres, public schools, the navy yard, &c., at all of which he was a welcome guest. At one of the schools a silver cup was presented to him, and at another a silver headed cane, the stem of which was made from a part of a chevaux-de-frise, used near West Point in the Revolution. He was also presented while on this visit, with an elegant horse, carriage and harness by the mayor.

Mr. Williams returned from New York in December, soon after which he began rapidly to fail. The excitement attending his visit had no doubt been too great for one of his age and retired habits. When spring again opened, and nature began to deck her offspring in blooming apparel, he exhibited symptoms of approaching dissolution. Conscious of his situation, he manifested a spirit of resignation to the Divine will. His complaint was dyspepsia. At times he suffered great pain in his limbs and breast, which could only be relieved by opium as an anodyne. During the paroxysms of pain he would frequently say, "Oh, how long before the contest will be over!" He wished for relief in death. He was attended in his last illness by good physicians, among whom was the late Doct. Hyde, of Rensselaerville. He continued gradually to waste away until sunset on Tuesday, the 2nd day of August, 1831, when he expired without a struggle or a groan. The last time he spoke was on Monday morning to give some directions about the place of his burial. Mr. Williams at his death, left an only child, a son, David W. Williams, who now lives upon the farm formerly owned by his father in Broome. He has seven children, four sons and three daughters, and is now (1845) 48 years old. His mother, now in her 89th year, lives with him. After her husband had been dead ten years, Mrs. Williams obtained a continuance of his pension, which had been stopped at his death, receiving \$2000 at once.



The following account of the death and burial of Mr. Williams, is copied from the Schoharie Republican, dated Tuesday, August 9th, 1831.

"The venerable David Williams, the last of the captors of Major Andre, has gone to his rest, full of years and full of glory. He died in Broome, Schoharie county, on Tuesday, the 2d instant, at the age of 77. His remains were interred on Thursday, with military honors, at Livingstonville, in the presence of a large concourse of citizens, who had assembled to pay the last sad tribute of respect to his mortal remains.

"At 10 o'clock, A. M., a sermon was preached by the Rev. Mr. Smith of Rensselaerville. After the service, a procession was formed, under the direction of Col. Joseph Bouck, of Middleburgh, in the following order:

	Military.	
	Reverend Clergy.	
Pall Bearers.	The Corpse.	Pall Bearers.
Col. John Niles.		Col. L. M. Dayton.
Col. Z. Pratt.		Lt. H. Dayton.
Relations of the Deceased.		
Citizens."		

At the grave a very appropriate eulogy was pronounced by Robert McClellan, Esq. Mr. Murphy addressed the assemblage, briefly reviewing the former life of his deceased kinsman; and the solemn exercises were closed by a prayer from the Rev. Mr. Smith.

When the British evacuated Philadelphia in 1778, Gen. Benedict Arnold was given command of that station. His extravagance and dissipation, while a resident of that city, subjected him to a court martial, and a reprimand from the Commander-in-chief. From that moment the star that had guided his footsteps in the path of glory and honor was extinguished, and more evil spirits took possession of his soul, than haunted a certain woman of olden time. In 1780, Arnold sought and obtained from Gen. Washington, the command of the forts at West Point. He soon after, by letter, signified to Sir Henry Clinton, the British Commander-in-chief, then at New York, by a correspondence carried on for a while between Maj. Andre and Mrs. Arnold, and afterwards by



himself, under the assumed name of *Gustavus*, while Andre assumed that of *John Anderson*, his intention of surrendering that fortress, the Gibraltar of the Union, to the British. Andre was selected by Clinton to complete the diabolical design, and he, for that purpose, landed from the sloop of war *Vulture*, which had ascended the Hudson, on Thursday night, September 21st, 1780, and held an interview with Mons. Gustavus. Joshua H. Smith, with two brothers, Samuel and Joseph Cahoon, as oarsmen, visited the *Vulture* about midnight, with oars muffled with sheep-skins, agreeable to the orders of Gen. Arnold, and receiving Andre on board their boat, landed with him at the foot of a mountain called the *Long Clove*, on the west margin of the river,  $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles below Smith's residence at Haverstraw, (which residence was distant from Stony Point  $2\frac{3}{4}$  miles,) and nearly 20 miles below West Point. To the place of meeting, Arnold had ridden from Smith's house. The boatmen refused to return that night to the ship, and after a protracted conference, Arnold and Andre proceeded on horseback to the dwelling of Smith, who went with the boatmen to Crom's Island, in Haverstraw creek, where the boat was left, and then returned with them to his home, arriving about daylight. Andre was clad in full uniform, but over it he wore a blue traveling coat. The positive orders from Clinton to Andre were—"not to change his dress—go within the American lines—or receive any papers."

Morning dawned ere the hellish plot was consummated, and his return to the sloop deferred until the next night. Early in the morning a heavy gun was brought to bear on the *Vulture*, by a party of Americans on shore; and several shots planted between wind and water compelled her to drop down the stream, where her men stole some plank on the bank of the river, and stopped her leaks. The night following, two men deserted from the *Vulture* in a boat. It was very dark, but the darkness being lit up at intervals by vivid lightning, the fugitives escaped to the shore, although they were pursued some distance by a boat's crew.—*Jude Watson, a sentinel in the Highlands at the time.*

Finding his return to the vessel cut off, Andre was compelled to set out for New York by land. Laying aside his regimentals, he

put on a plain suit of clothes belonging to Smith, and having received a pass from Arnold, he started on horseback, under his assumed name, on Friday evening, September 22d, accompanied by Smith and a black servant of the latter. About sundown they crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry, from Stony Point on the west, to Verplanck's Point on the east side. They met with but little interruption until they arrived near Crom pond, between eight and nine o'clock, when they were hailed by a sentinel under Capt. Ebenezer Boyd. That officer examined the pass of Arnold to Smith, and advised the party to put up at one Andreas Miller's over night, which advice was followed. He also advised Smith to take the road by North Castle Church and Wright's mills, as being less likely to meet with cow-boys on that than on the Tarrytown road: the latter advice was, however, not regarded, for obvious reasons. Two miles beyond *Pine's bridge* they ate a breakfast of hasty pudding, or supawn and milk, at the house of a Dutch woman. Smith soon after took leave of Andre, and with his servant returned to Peekskill, and from thence to Fishkill, where his wife had been previously sent. Andre succeeded in passing all the American guards and posts on the road without suspicion, and was proceeding to New York in perfect security, when, on Saturday morning, between nine and ten o'clock, he was arrested in what was then called Beekman's forest, near a small brook, about half a mile from Tarrytown. He had taken the road that way as being more likely to meet with *friends* upon it, or to find safety on board a British vessel in that part of the river.

The following papers were found on the person of Andre:

"No. 1.—Artillery orders [then] recently published at West Point, directing the disposition of each corps in case of alarm. No. 2.—An estimate of the American force at West Point and its dependencies. No. 3.—An estimate of the number of men requisite to man the works. No. 4.—A return of the ordnance in the different forts, redoubts, and batteries. No. 5.—Remarks on the works at West point, describing the construction of each, and its strength or weakness. No. 6.—A report of a council of war lately held at Head Quarters, containing hints respecting the probable operations of the campaign, and which had been sent by Gen. Washington a few days before, requesting his opinion on the subjects to which it referred. These papers were all in the hand-

writing of Arnold, and bore his signature. In case of Andre's detection, the papers were to be destroyed."

When taken before Col. Jamieson by his captors, Andre, anxious for his own safety and that of his accomplice, requested Col. Jamieson to inform Arnold that Anderson (himself,) was taken, which solicitation was very imprudently complied with. A line was despatched by Solomon Allen, which gave the traitor an opportunity of making his escape; and he readily embraced it, leaving the spy to his fate.

At the time of his treason, Arnold was making his head quarters at the *Beverly*, or *Robinson house*, as still called, a dwelling which belonged to Beverly Robinson, then an officer in the British service, situated about two miles below West Point, on the east side of the river. It was at his own quarters he had purposed to have held his interview with Andre, at an earlier date; but circumstances prevented. Washington was to have breakfasted with Arnold on the morning of his flight; but sending his aids with his compliments, and an apology to Mrs. Arnold, he rode down to inspect the redoubts on that side of the river. The messenger with Jamieson's note arrived while the company were at breakfast. Leaving the table abruptly, and with evident emotion, Arnold set out for West Point, saying that his immediate presence was demanded there. Washington had been to Hartford on business, and an express dispatched to him passed him, in consequence of his taking an unexpected route back, else he would have been apprized the evening before of Arnold's treason. Instead of going to West Point, Arnold proceeded to the river; and entering his barge, ordered two men to row him on board the *Vulture*, then at anchor in Tappan bay, below King's ferry. They did not like to comply with his request, but were stimulated to do so by the promise of a liberal reward. Once on board the vessel, Arnold wished to detain the men as prisoners; but the captain, on being informed what was passing, interfered, ordered the men to be paid what the traitor had promised them, and then liberated; which order was promptly obeyed. He made his escape at 10 o'clock on Monday morning following the capture of Andre, and Wash-

ington was apprized of his treasonable conduct at 4 P. M. of the same day.

It seems not a little surprising that Col. Jamieson, after enjoining secrecy on the captors, from a belief that others were concerned, should himself take measures to notify one he could not fail, in his right mind, to suspect, even if he did not discover that the treasonable papers were all in his hand-writing. Col. Jamieson was probably bewildered; for at first he actually ordered Maj. Andre sent to Arnold's head quarters. From the Journal of Maj. Tallmadge, who had command of a corps of cavalry in West Chester, I make the following extract:

"When I reached Lieut. Col. Jamieson's quarters, late in the evening of the 23d, and had learned the circumstances of the capture of the prisoner, I was very much surprised to learn that he was sent by that officer to Arnold's head quarters at West Point, *accompanied by a letter of information respecting his capture.* At the same time he despatched an express to meet Gen. Washington, then on his way to West Point. I felt much impressed with the course which had been taken, and did not fail to state the glaring inconsistency of this conduct to Col. Jamieson in a private and most friendly manner. He appeared greatly agitated when I suggested to him a measure which I wished to pursue; offering to take the whole responsibility on myself, and which, as he deemed it too perilous to permit, I will not further disclose." [The measure proposed by Major Tallmadge was, as he at a subsequent period informed his family, to proceed as speedily as possible with his troops to *Arnold's head quarters, and arrest him on his own responsibility.*]

"Failing in this purpose," [continues the journal,] "I instantly set about a plan to remand the prisoner to our quarters, which I finally effected, although with reluctance on the part of Col. Jamieson. When the order was about to be despatched to the officer to bring the prisoner back, strange as it may seem, Col. J. *would persist* in his purpose of letting the letter go to Gen. Arnold. The letter did go on, and the prisoner returned before the next morning. As soon as I saw *Anderson*, and especially after I saw him walk (as he did almost constantly) across the floor, I became impressed with the belief that he had been *bred to arms.* I very soon communicated my suspicion to Col. Jamieson, and requested him to notice his gait, and especially when he turned on his heel to retrace his course across the room. It was deemed best to remove the prisoner to Salem, and I was to escort him. I kept constantly in the room with the prisoner, who became very conversable, and extremely interesting. Indeed, he very pleasantly inquired why I watched him so narrowly. It was very manifest that his agita-



tion and anxiety were great ; and after dinner on the 24th, perhaps by 3 o'clock P. M., he asked to be favored with a *pen, ink, and paper*, which I readily granted, and he wrote the letter to Gen. Washington, dated Salem, 24th September, 1780, which is recorded in most of the histories of that eventful period. In this letter he disclosed his true character to be '*Major John Andre, Adjutant General to the British Army.*' When I received and read the letter, for he handed it to me as soon as he had written it, my agitation was extreme, and my emotions wholly inddescribable. If the letter of information had not gone to Gen. Arnold, I should not have hesitated for a moment in my purpose ; but this I knew must reach him before I could possibly get to West Point.

"I took on Maj. Andre, under a strong escort of cavalry, to West Point, and the next day I proceeded down the Hudson to King's ferry, and landed at Haverstraw, on the west side of the Hudson, where a large escort of cavalry had been sent from the main army at Tappan, with which I conducted the prisoner to head quarters, where I reported proceedings to Gen Washington, who ordered a Court Martial."

The part Joshua H. Smith had acted in the treasonable affair, left suspicions resting upon him ; on which account he was tried by a court martial. The board consisted of Col. H. Jackson, as president, Lieut. Col. Hait, Maj. Ball, and Captains Jacob Wright, Drew, Fry, Sandford, Fowle, Daniels, J. A. Wright, Marshall, Chase, and Tiffany ; conducted by John Lawrence, Judge Advocate General. The captors of Andre were among the witnesses called on the trial. In the absence of testimony to criminate him, after an investigation lasting two weeks, he was finally acquitted, though not without some suspicion of guilt. Arnold and Andre, however, both exonerated Smith from any knowledge of what was passing between them ; the former by letter, and the latter when on trial.

Maj. Andre was tried at Tappan, Sept. 29, 1780, and condemned to be hung as a spy. The board consisted of

Nathaniel Greene, M. Gen., President.

Sterling,	M. G.	H. Knox,	B. G.
La Fayette,	"	Jno. Glover,	"
R. Howe,	"	Jno. Patterson,	"
Steuben,	"	Edw. Hand,	"
Saml. H. Parsons,	B. G.	J. Huntington.	"
James Clinton,	"	John Starke,	"

John Lawrence, Judge Adv. Gen.



Of this court martial it may justly be said, that an abler or more impartial one was never convened on a similar occasion. When the examination commenced, he was informed by the court, from whom he received every possible indulgence, that he was at liberty to answer no questions unless he chose; but he frankly confessed every thing material to his condemnation. He evinced great firmness on his trial, in the course of which he spoke of Capt. Hale. Said he, "I wish that in all that dignifies man, that adorns and elevates human nature, that I could be named with that accomplished, but unfortunate officer. His fate was wayward and untimely; he was cut off yet younger than I now am. But ours are not parallel cases."

After his condemnation, Andre wrote to Gen. Washington requesting as a last favor that he might be shot; a request the commander would have granted, had he consulted only his own feelings, instead of the inflexible demands of justice. The execution was first ordered to take place at 5 o'clock P. M., on the 1st day of October, and a vast concourse of people then assembled, but it was postponed until the next day in consequence of the arrival of a *flag* from the enemy. Gen. Greene met Gen. Robertson at Dobb's Ferry, but as the latter could make no proposals calculated to save the spy, the conference soon ended.—*Journal of Maj. Tallmadge.*

When led out on the morning of Oct. 2d, he chose to walk to the place of execution, some two miles distant. The American army was drawn out to witness the sad spectacle, and as he passed through the files of soldiers bowing to those he knew, many a brave heart throbbed with emotion, and from many an eye, which had calmly glanced along the rifle's barrel in the hour of peril when it was dealing groans and death, now gushed the warm tears of pity.

A wagon containing his coffin, the latter painted black, followed a number of American officers of rank on horseback; behind which Andre marched in procession with Maj. Tallmadge on foot. About one-quarter of a mile from the village of Tappan, in Rockland county, stood a high gallows, made by setting

up two crotches and laying a pole across the top. The wagon that contained his coffin was drawn under the gallows. Andre, after shaking hands with several friends, stepped into the wagon, and stood upon the coffin. Laying down his hat, he paced back and forth several times the length of his narrow house, with his hands upon his hips, casting his eyes upon the pole overhead and the surrounding scenery. He was dressed in a British uniform, sent to him after his arrest. It consisted of a rich scarlet coat trimmed with green, with vest and breeches of bright buff. His dying request to the spectators was—" *Witness to the world that I die like a brave man!*" The executioner, painted black, stepped into the wagon to adjust the halter, which had a hangman's knot at the end. "Keep off your black hands," said Andre, as he removed his cravat and unpinned the collar of his shirt. Seizing the rope, he placed the noose around his neck with the knot under the right ear, and drew it up snugly; then taking from his coat a handkerchief, he tied it over his eyes. An officer told the hangman his arms must be tied. Andre drew the handkerchief from his eyes, and taking out another, handed it to the executioner, replacing the one over his eyes. His arms were tied above the elbows, behind his back—and the rope made fast to the pole overhead. The wagon was then suddenly drawn from under him, and soon his spirit was in the presence of his God.

After hanging nearly half an hour, the body was taken down and laid upon the ground. His coat, vest, and breeches were taken off and handed to two dwarfish looking servants dressed in gaudy apparel, who were in attendance from New York; to one of whom Andre handed his watch while standing in the wagon. The body was wrapped in a shroud, (as I have been informed by an eye witness,) before it was placed in a coffin. The captors of Andre witnessed his execution. Very great sympathy was manifested for Andre at his death. Says *Maj. Tallmadge*,

"When I saw him swing under the gibbet, it seemed for a time as if I could not support it. All the spectators appeared to be overwhelmed with the affecting spectacle, and many seemed to

be suffused in tears. There did not appear to be one hardened, or indifferent spectator in all the multitude of persons assembled on that solemn occasion."

Sir Henry Clinton made some efforts to save Andre, but still greater were those made by Gen. Washington; and "it is a singular fact, that while the former was hastening the death of Andre, the latter was exerting himself to ward off that calamity." So great was the desire of Gen. Washington to get Arnold and save Andre, that he sent one of his best soldiers into the camp of the enemy. Major Lee, who was entrusted by the Commander with the attempt to arrest the traitor, selected John Champe, a sergeant of cavalry, for the enterprise. Champe was a native of Loudon county, Virginia; a young man of much discernment and great personal bravery. The sergeant was to enter the enemy's lines as an American deserter—enlist into the British service under Arnold, and having matured his plans, was, with a trusty companion to surprise and gag him late in the evening—bear him to a boat and cross to the Jersey shore from New-York; where Major Lee was to await his arrival with two spare horses.—Champe approached the enemy hotly pursued by a party of his countrymen, and as they supposed their former comrade a deserter, it is not surprising the enemy admitted him into communion. Having all things ready, he notified Lee when to meet him; but fortunately for Arnold, on the afternoon of the very day on which the plan was to be consummated, that officer shifted his quarters, and the sergeant was transferred to another regiment. The scheme, of course proved abortive. Nothing but an unforeseen event saved Arnold from the just vengeance of his countrymen. The intrepid sergeant readily embraced the earliest opportunity to desert and return to the camp of Washington, who kindly received and rewarded him.—*Niles' Principles of the Revolution.*

*Capt. Nathan Hale*, to whom Major Andre alluded on his trial, is not sufficiently well known to the American reader. He was a son of Deacon Richard Hale, of South Coventry, Connecticut, and was born on the sixth day of June, 1756. He graduated at Yale College in September, 1773, with the first honors of the institution. He ardently espoused the cause of his suffering

country at an early day, and when the news of the Lexington fight reached New London where he was then teaching an academy, he dismissed his school, and joining the company of Capt. Coit, as a volunteer, marched to the vicinity of Boston. In the fall of 1775, he received a lieutenant's commission, and soon after a captain's, in Col. Charles Webb's regiment. Early in the summer of 1776, Gen. Washington formed a *select regiment* of infantry for special service, under the command of Col. Knowlton, a brave officer who fell that season at Harlem Heights.

After the unfortunate engagement which took place on Long Island, August 27, 1776, the Americans under the prudent Washington, abandoned the island and retreated to New-York, in the manner described in the journal of Major Tallmadge.

About this time an incident occurred as stated in the *Memoir of Capt. Hale*, (a neat pamphlet published early in the summer of 1844, for the *Hale Monument Association*—for a copy of which and the beautiful poem sent with it, the author would here acknowledge his indebtedness to the society,) which will serve to show the daring spirit of that hero.

“ Our troops were still wretchedly supplied with even the necessities of life ; things without which the warmest zeal cannot long endure. There was much suffering and much repining. A British sloop, laden with provisions, was lying in the East river, under cover of the ship *Asia*, man-of-war with 90 guns. Capt. Hale formed the bold project of capturing this sloop, and bringing her into the harbor of New-York. He soon found hardy compeers for the enterprise. At dead of night the little band of adventurers rowed silently, in a small boat, to a point near the sloop, and there waited for the moon to go down. As soon as it was dark, and all still, save the watchman's voice from the deck of the *Asia*, they darted upon their prey, sprang aboard, hoisted sail, and brought her into port with the British tars in the hold, and without the loss of a man. This exploit was loudly applauded, and the daring leader distributed the goods of his prize to feed and clothe the hungry and naked soldiers.”

The retreat of the Americans from Brooklyn, left the whole island in possession of the British. Anxious to obtain information of their strength and intended future operations, Washington applied to Col. Knowlton to gain such information, who made the request known to his officers. Among others, he solicited a ser-

geant to undertake it, who had served in the French war: but the knotted hero promptly refused, saying that *he was ready to fight the British at any place or time, but did not feel willing to go among them to be hung up like a dog.* Young Hale, inspired with a sense of duty, and a belief that the safety of his country demanded the desired information, at once volunteered his services for the enterprise; and in a citizen's dress and capacity of a school teacher, he proceeded to Norwalk, Conn., from whence he was conveyed to Huntington, L. I., in an armed sloop. He journeyed to Brooklyn, went through the enemy's lines, and after making a careful survey of their posts and strength, he crossed over to New-York, where a part of the British army were then stationed; and having faithfully completed his charge, set out on his return to the American camp, then near the Harlem Heights—five or six miles from the city. When nearly out of danger as he supposed, he met a small party of the enemy, and one of their number, a refugee cousin who had espoused the cause of oppression, recognized and betrayed him. This relative was on a visit to Hale's father's only a year or two before. The party made the *spy* a captive, and hastened with him to the presence of Sir William Howe.

The proof of his object was so clear that he frankly acknowledged who he was, and what were his views. Howe at once gave orders for his execution on the following morning. The order was executed on the morning of September 22d, in a most unfeeling and barbarous manner, by William Cunningham,\* the British provost-marshal, than whom a greater villain never disgraced a human form. "A clergyman, whose attendance he requested,

\* He was a native of Dublin, Ireland. He was executed some time after the war for a forgery committed in England. In his dying confession, he says: "I shudder to think of the murders I have been accessory to, *both with and without orders from government*, especially while in New York; during which time there were more than *two thousand* prisoners starved in the different churches, by stopping their rations, which I sold. There were also *two hundred and seventy five* American prisoners and obnoxious persons executed, out of all which number there were only about one dozen public executions, which chiefly consisted of British and Hessian deserters."—*Niles' Principles of the Revolution.*



was refused him ; a Bible, for a few moments' devotion, was not procured, although he wished it." Letters, which, on the morning of his execution, he wrote to his intended, and other friends, were destroyed ; and this very extraordinary reason given by the provost-marshal, "*That the rebels should not know they had a man in their army who could die with so much firmness.*" Unknown to all around him,—without a single friend to offer him the least consolation,—thus fell as amiable and as worthy a young man as America could boast, with this, his dying observation : "*He only lamented that he had but one life to lose for his country.*" Andre, in his defence, alluded to the death of Capt. Hale, and paid his character a just tribute. He closed his allusion to the fate of Hale by saying that their cases were not parallel. Let us see how far they differed :

Both, when taken, were in a citizen's dress, and that of Andre at least, not his own ; both had been within the lines of the enemy in that disguise ; Andre had assumed a false name, although it is not certain that Hale did ; both had gone to learn the situation of the enemy's works, and Andre was taking measures to criminate another—and while neither the expectation of pecuniary reward or promotion influenced the action of Hale, it is not certain but both were in prospect for Andre. The one was the agent of a powerful king, sent to fix the manacles of despotism upon his fellow subjects, and by so doing entwine the laurel wreath upon his own brow, or receive a high sounding court title ; the other was the agent of an oppressed people, struggling to be free, who felt it his *duty*, not for gold or worldly honors, to peril his life. Andre was planning the easy capture of a strong fortress by becoming accessory to treason ; Hale was endeavoring to learn the future operations of the enemy, *not* through the treachery and crime of her officers. Andre was twenty-nine years old when he suffered, and Hale but twenty-two. If both were guilty of the same crime, under precisely the same circumstances, should not sympathy naturally incline to the younger ? for age is expected to bring with it *experience* divested of rashness. Contrast the treatment of the two officers after their arrest : The one is tried

by court-martial, and every possible indulgence granted him, added to the sympathy of the whole American people; while the other, without the form of a trial, or the sympathy of a single Briton,—without being granted the favor of Christian devotion,—without permission to send a dying epistle to his father,—is hurried out and executed, with the cold formality that would attend the hanging of a rabid dog. Finally, let us contrast their dying words. Said Andre to the spectators, “*Witness to the world that I die like a brave man!*” Said Hale, “*I only lament that I have but one life to lose for my country!*”. The one implies a desire for *personal fame*, even in death; while in the other, *self* is buried deep in the *love of country*. Reader! can you look on this picture, and feel that justice is done to the character of your beloved Hale?—to an accomplished and feeling scholar, who laid down his life a willing sacrifice for his bleeding country? His blood, while yet warmed with the fire of youth, watered the then withering roots of the tree of Liberty. The time has arrived when *justice ought to be done to the character of Hale*; and I believe that if ever this Republic rears two monuments for her illustrious dead, the one should bear the name of “the father of his country,” and on the other should be inscribed the name of the *patriot martyr to American liberty, Nathan Hale*. It is said that the father of Capt. Hale was mentally deranged ever after the execution of his son.

In August, 1831, the remains of Andre were exhumed by royal mandate, under the direction of J. Buchanan, British Consul at New York, and removed to England to find a resting place in Westminster Abbey, where a monument had previously been erected to his memory.

Major Andre was no doubt a brave, accomplished, and at times, generous man; but sympathy, for which the American character has ever been distinguished, and for which I trust it ever will be, tended at the time of his death to throw around his name a fictitious coloring that would not stand the ordeal of scrutiny. Going to prove that fact, is the following article, which is an extract of a communication published in the *Philadelphia True American*, and copied by Niles in his Register, March 1, 1817:

“Andre was in Philadelphia with the English army, and was quartered at the house of Dr. Franklin, in which the Doctor’s furniture and very valuable library had been left. When the British were preparing to evacuate the city, M. D. Simetre,\* who was an intimate friend of Andre, called to take leave, and found him busily engaged in packing up and placing amongst his own baggage a number of the most valuable books belonging to Doctor Franklin. Shocked and surprised at the proceeding, he told him, in order that he might be influenced by the highly honorable conduct of Gen. Kniphausen, who had been quartered at Gen. Cadwallader’s that that officer sent for the agent of the latter, gave him an inventory, which he had caused his steward to make out on his first taking possession, told him he would find every thing in proper order, even to some bottles of wine in the cellar, and paid him rent for the time he occupied it. Not so with Andre; he quietly carried off his plunder. I have often thought his character owes many beams which play around it, to the fascination of Miss Seward’s verse and description, of which he was by no means worthy, though there can be no doubt but he was a gallant soldier, and in some respects, an honest man.”

It is also stated in a pamphlet publication of the proceedings, at the time a monument was erected to the memory of John Paulding, on the authority of Johnson’s *Life of Gen. Greene*, that Maj. Andre was in Charleston, South Carolina, in the character of a *spy*, during the siege of that city by the British; and that he was probably instrumental, to a great extent, in involving the very men in captivity, whose fate he intimated in his letter to Washington avowing his real character, “the treatment he received might affect.”

Gen. Greene was in command of the army at head quarters during Washington’s visit to Hartford, to meet the French officers, and in a letter to him, dated two days before Andre’s arrest, he thus writes from Tappan :

“Col. — communicated the last intelligence we have from New York; since that I have not been able to obtain the least information of what is going on there, though we have people in from three different quarters. None of them returning, makes me suspect some secret expedition is in contemplation, the success of which depends upon its being kept a secret.”

“Arnold knew the bearing of this post (West Point), upon all

\*Simetre was a native of Genoa, who had settled in Philadelphia, and was the person who laid the foundation of the valuable museum, now belonging to Mr. Peal.

the operations of the American army ; and afterwards avowed his confident expectation, that, had the enemy got possession of it, the contest must have ceased, and America been subdued."

Andre was not only pleased with poetry, but wrote it very well. His poetic wit generally flowed in a strain of sarcasm, and the American officers were usually the butt of it. His most celebrated poem of the kind was called the *Cow Chase*, written a short time before his death, and in this he aimed a share of his wit at Gen. Wayne, one of the bravest of the brave. The doggerel ended with the following stanza :

" And now I've closed my epic strain,  
I tremble as I show it,  
Lest this same warrior-drover, Wayne,  
Should ever catch the poet."

When Andre was delivered a prisoner at the village of Tappan, he found Gen. Wayne in command of a division of the army, the first Pennsylvania brigade, then stationed at that place. Thus we see that indirectly "the warrior-drover Wayne" did *catch* the poet.

As a reward for his treason, Arnold received from the British government, as is supposed, *ten thousand pounds*, and a commission in her service. He issued a proclamation to induce the American soldiers to desert ; yet, as dark as their prospects were, English writers say there was not a solitary instance of desertion on his account. He was actively employed until the close of the war, exerting himself to injure his parent country. At the end of the war, he was engaged in commercial pursuits in the West Indies. He afterwards removed to England, where he was shunned and despised by all virtuous and honorable men.\*

He died in London in 1801. The following acrostic, published many years ago, and for which the writer is indebted to the tenacious memory of a bachelor friend, does ample justice to his character :

\*The following anecdote, given by one of his biographers, will show the estimation in which his character was held in the land of his adoption. On a certain occasion Lord Surry, rising to speak in the House of Commons, and perceiving Arnold in the gallery, sat down with precipitation, exclaiming, " I will not speak while that man" pointing to Arnold, " is in the house."

“ Born for a curse to nature and mankind,  
Earth's darkest realms can't show so black a mind ;  
Night, sable night, his crimes can never hide,  
Each is so great it gluts historic tide :  
Defunct, in memory shall ever live,  
In all the glare that infamy can give ;  
Curses of ages shall attend thy name ;  
Traitors alone shall glory in thy fame.

Almighty vengeance sternly waits to roll  
Rivers of sulphur o'er thy treach'rous soul ;  
Nature looks back, with conscious error sad,  
On such a tarnished blot that she had made.  
Let *hell* receive thee, riveted in chains,  
*Damned to the focus of its hottest flames.*”

The captors of Andre are now dead, and monuments have been erected over the dust of two of them, to point the traveler not only to the generosity of their countrymen, but to the triumph of *virtue* over the corrupting influence of *gold*. *Paulding* died Feb. 18th, 1818, and was buried at Peekskill, Westchester county, where a monument was raised to his memory by the common council of New York, Nov. 22d, 1827. *Van Wart* died May 23d, 1828, and on the 11th of June, 1829, the citizens of Westchester placed a monument over his remains. My friend, Mr. Murphy, who well knew the merits of the last survivor, *Williams*, has been indefatigable in his efforts to get a monument to his memory. He has repeatedly petitioned Congress, the proper source surely, for an appropriation to erect one, and has even been in person to urge the matter—but as yet in vain. *Are* republics ungrateful? Mr. Murphy has several times elicited from Congress a favorable *report* ; but those reports, like similar ones for a monument to the ill-fated Hale, have died still-born. The memory of those heroes should be honored, although it be necessary to lessen the *mileage* of Congressmen, or tax their receipts for *imaginary distance* to do it. Virtue merits the cherished recollection of the good, and surely it is not vanity that dictates the erection of marble to remind us of departed worth, and tell where rests a hero.















